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BILL MOYERS

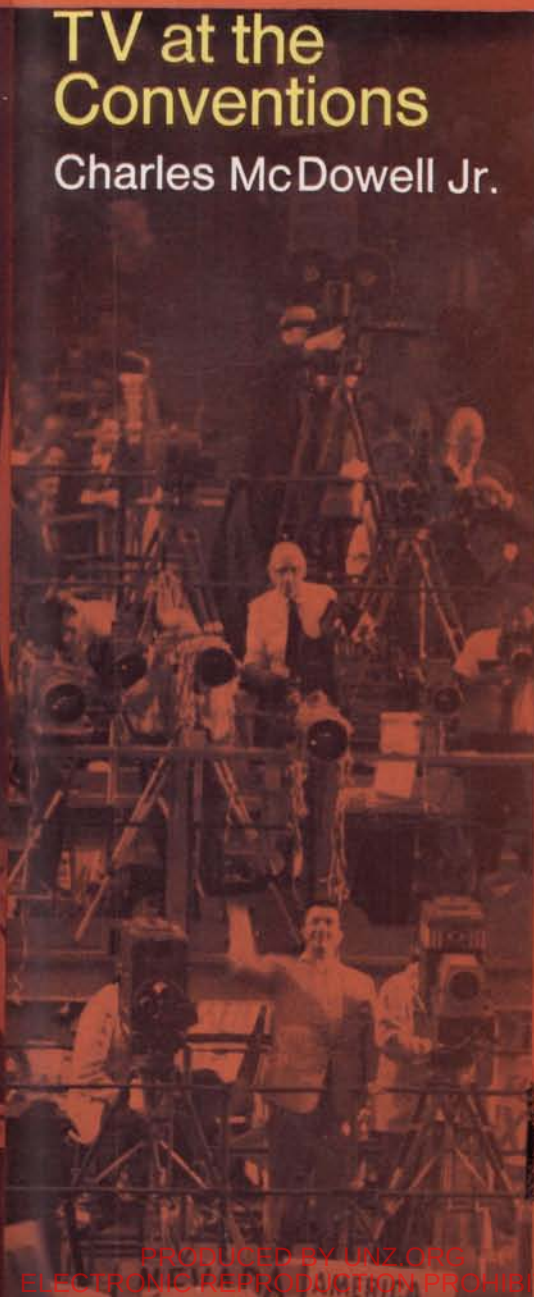
Talks about
BJ,
Power,
Poverty,
War
& the Young



Carnival of Excess

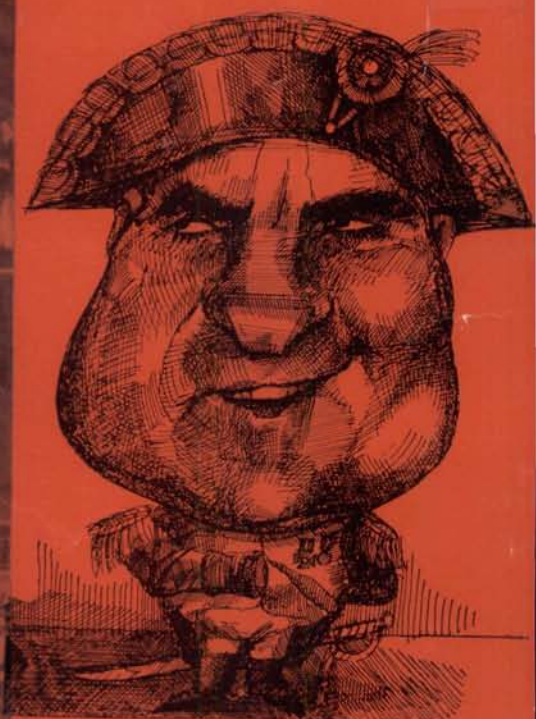
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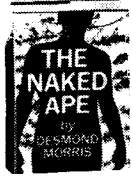
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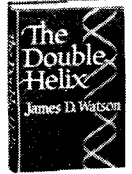
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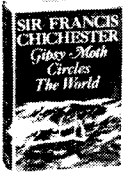
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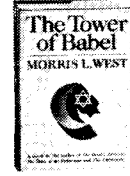
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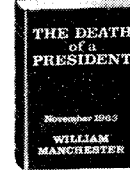
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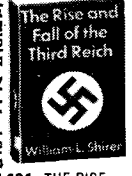


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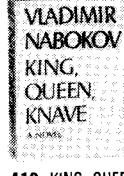
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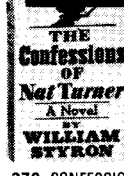
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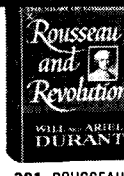
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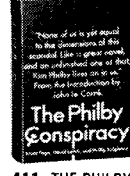
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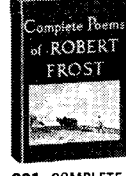
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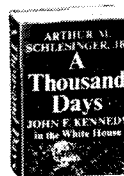
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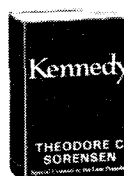
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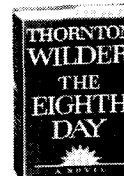
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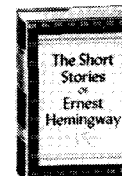
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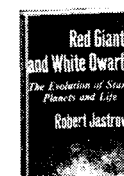
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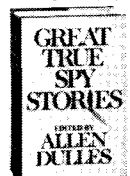
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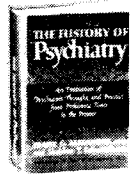
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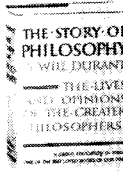
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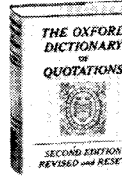
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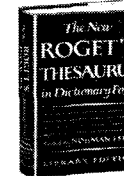
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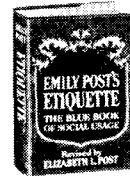
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reports

Campaigning: Nixon

NIXON



Westerners are different from the rest of us. It has something to do with roots, or the lack of them, the restlessness of the frontier; the big sky, the mountains exploding from flat plains, the space; the animals, the sparse population. Boom or bust, life sometimes solid, sometimes not, depending on the breaks, the chances. Rootlessness can be liberating or imprisoning, depending on the man. Richard Nixon is the most rootless man in American public life, the only major American politician of his generation to switch addresses. Of course, there was Eisenhower, but he had an Army APO number.

The Nixons, Pat and Dick, are Westerners. Pat Nixon is the daughter of a footloose gold prospector who had struggled overland from Connecticut to South Dakota and Nevada. Pat Nixon, now of Fifth Avenue, New York, looked down at the Salmon River mountains of Idaho, pointed out the window of the Electra, and said, this is my country; Dick's too. Through the clouds the mountains bumped into each other, and the snow looked

hard-packed in the gullies that reached like fingers down the slopes of the mountain. Life in those mountains was hard and insecure. But it was great country, she said; people were more open, easier.

New York City, Nixon had observed, was too parochial. "I need to get out, to see the governors, to find out what is on their minds." He said there seemed to be an absence of trivia and pettiness in the Far West; he thought that the people were more sincere. He did not go further, for he was speaking to representatives of the Eastern press. Anyway, it was good to get out — to talk about agriculture and land use, to learn, as he confided, with some surprise, that the Secretary of the Interior, Stewart Udall, was as unpopular as the Secretary of Agriculture, Orville Freeman. It was the sort of thing that was useful to know.

The time was late April, and for weeks Richard Nixon had hung back, saying little, the occasional provocateur of a line in a column on the editorial pages of the *New York Times*. He was reassessing his position after Lyndon Johnson's abrupt announcement on March 31. What to do now? The situation was very cloudy. Nelson Rockefeller had not yet reversed direction. Some political figures were talking of John Lindsay, but not many. Out west there was Ronald Reagan, the direct spiritual descendant of Barry Goldwater. "Ron," as his aides called him, was an imponderable. "I take him at his word when he says he is not a candidate," Nixon had said. But Nixon did not believe this, nor did anybody else.

So he planned a tour through the Western states, partly to test sentiment but partly also, as he said, to get back west. At the end of April, aboard a chartered Electra, Nixon flew to Washington to address the American Society of Newspaper Editors. It was a performance of the style which commentators had come to call the New Nixon. With wit and self-deprecating humor, he wowed the editors. It was all the more flavorful when contrasted with the performance of his rival, Rockefeller, who read a dreary speech in a monotone and put the editors to sleep. Late that Saturday, savoring the triumph, Nixon flew to Michigan to meet briefly with George Romney. Then he enplaned on the swing: Minnesota, North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Idaho, and South Dakota.

Minnesota

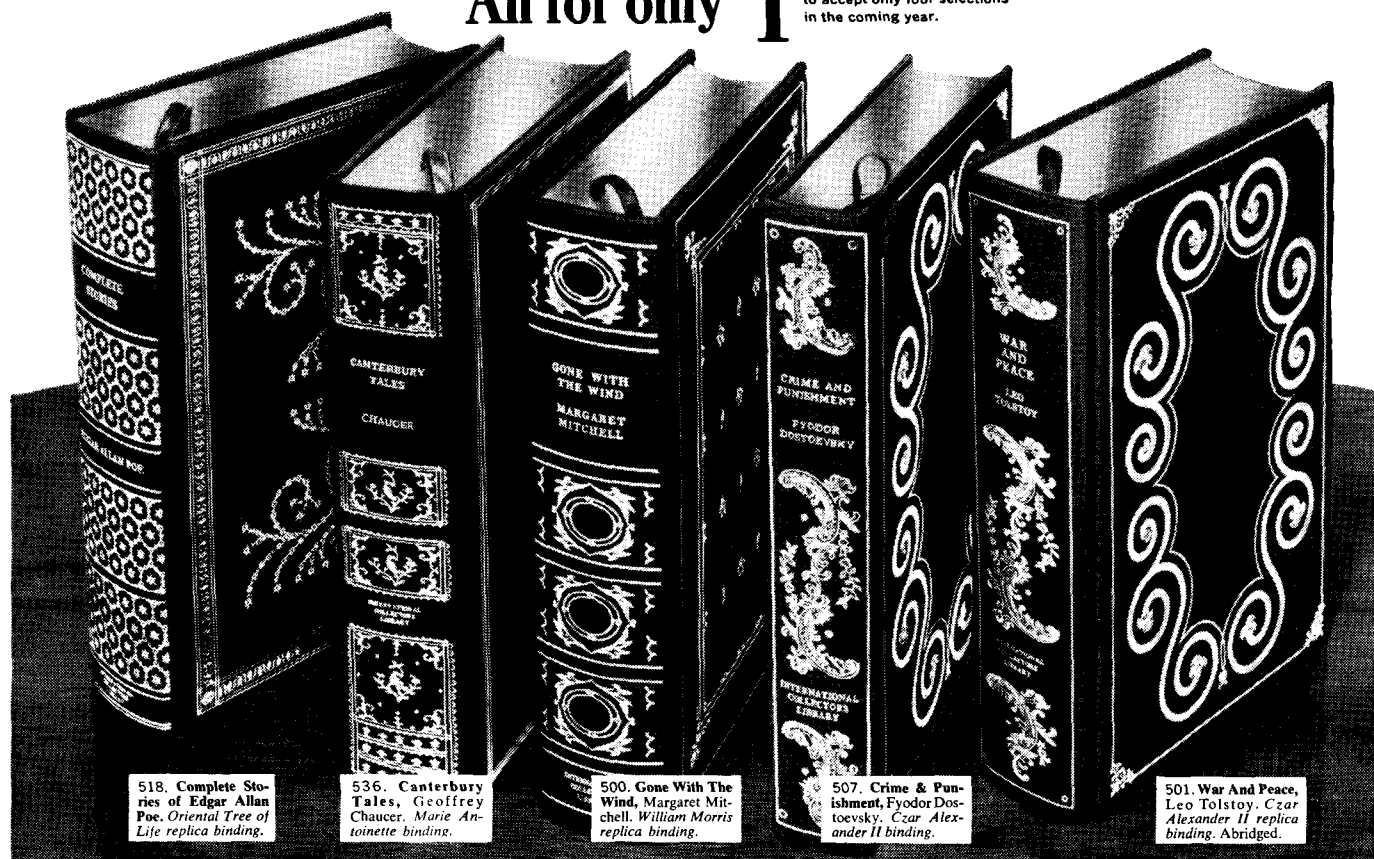
Nixon's problem is as old as Nixon himself. It is quite simply that to the independent-minded voter, he does not have easily definable public views that mesh with the man. In a crisis, how would he react? What were his bases, the fixed stars by which he navigated? If all the charts were lost, could he find his way home?

At noon he arrived in the lobby of the Sheraton-Ritz to face the television cameras. It was an uneventful press conference; except to several of the journalists there Nixon looked tired and drawn. This was surprising because he was being very careful to pace himself, not to allow himself the exhaustion which marked the final weeks of the 1960 campaign, the campaign in which he

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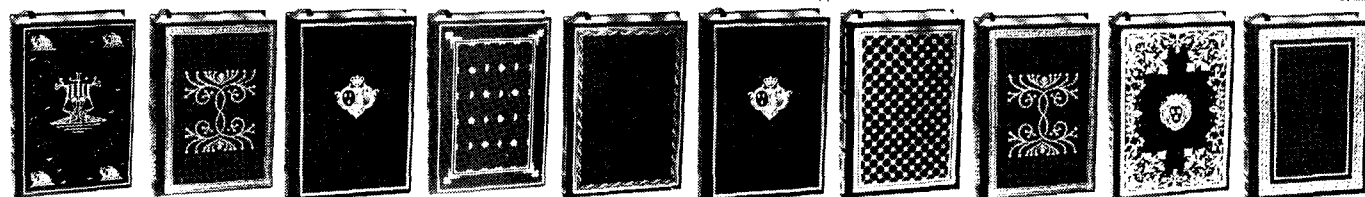
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Campaigning: Nixon

had foolishly promised to visit all fifty states. But at that first press conference, he began to spell out his themes, the pillboxes from which he would defend the fort. He had disposed of the war three weeks before by declaring a moratorium on criticism of the Administration on grounds that negotiations were under way and no responsible American, not even a member of the opposition party, would want to “undercut” the President at such a difficult time. But there were other matters.

He clarified some of these. At a time of the “greatest financial crisis in our history,” Nixon said, it is a “cruel delusion” to the poor to be told that billions would be spent on the cities. What was wanted was “candor,” not “dishonest” proposals. Candor, in this case, meant that until the nation received what Nixon called “the peace dividend” — that is, a surcease from the awful expenditures of the war in Vietnam — the cities would have to wait. That was the brief message: the economy in terrible trouble, the cities and the Negroes in need of attention but not now; criticism on the war forestalled for the moment. Detailed explanations would follow on all fronts.

The next day, Eugene McCarthy tried to catch him on the “dishonest” quote, claiming that it was a revival of the Old Nixon, the darkness-of-spirit Nixon, the gut fighter impugning the motives of others. Remember what he did to Helen Gahagan Douglas? McCarthy’s charge did not carry very far, and did not receive prominent attention in the press. But Nixon did not use “dishonest” again to describe his political opponents.

North Dakota

Nixon rarely speaks to bipartisan audiences. The typical sponsors of a Nixon rally are Republican clubs, usually the local leadership. The hall is always filled with supporters. Fifty local politicians and their wives were introduced from the head tables at Moorhead, across the river from Fargo. It all has the atmosphere of a rally, with a long sign in the back of the auditorium: NixonNixonNixonNixon. The crowd is enthusiastic, awaiting Nixon’s

assault on the Democrats. This particular crowd is laced with young Republicans, well-scrubbed men and women in conservative dress, hair tidily combed. It was at Moorhead that the press corps sensed something askew. Or maybe merely funny.

“Do you know something?” said a reporter, standing on a chair counting the house. “There is not a single black face in this auditorium.”

There were 1700 people in the hall. Two reporters now looked around the vast cavern, searching for Negroes. There were not many Negroes in North Dakota.

“There’s one!” cried a correspondent.

“No, for Chrisakes,” said the other. “He’s a cameraman for NBC.”

Nixon began slowly, warming his audience with jokes now well-worn and honed with careful timing: “It has been a crazy month. First Romney got out. Then Bobby got in. Then Rockefeller got out . . . at least I thought he did.” A burst of laughter. There was a smallish incident here, indicative of how difficult it is to take Nixon lightly. One of the best lines was delivered early, a determined parody of Lyndon Johnson’s renunciation speech: “I want to say to you,” Nixon said grimly, “that I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination for *vice* president.” He smiled widely, and about half the audience laughed. One of those who didn’t laugh was a local wire-service man, who instantly transmitted it over his wire: “Richard M. Nixon announced tonight that he would not accept his party’s nomination for vice president.” The reporter played it straight.

Then he moved into the speech, the basic campaign document, the big, two-hearted river of the Nixon campaign for the presidency. It is the vehicle for the theme, changing from time to time, evolving as events evolve, but at root an immutable metaphor. All candidates have them. Nixon’s metaphor was not yet rigid, and until it was, he could not bring real velocity to the campaign. It is probably best expressed by one of his campaign slogans: *In Times Like These . . . Nixon*. It was the equivalent of Kennedy’s *We Can Do Better* or Romney’s *Morality*. There was remi-

niscence: “Not only did the Eisenhower Administration end one war, but it kept the nation out of other wars for eight years.” And matters as they stood today: “The United States is in trouble to an extent that we have not seen in my lifetime.” But not a time for despair: “If I had to choose from all the times and all the countries to live in, I would choose the United States of America in 1968.” There were references to his journeys abroad, to his conversations with statesmen. He seemed to be saying that he knew what it was all about, what had gone wrong. He had been there, at the center of events for eight years. The others didn’t know, but Nixon knew. He had an appreciation for the two (three? four? 126?) cultures: “The Chinese have a character for the word crisis. One brushstroke goes *down*, and that means danger. (His voice drops, his left hand plunging to the floor.) The other brushstroke goes up, and that means *opportunity*.” And menace: “A billion Chinese by the end of the century, armed with Nuclear Weapons . . .”

There were other signals as well. One of these was a reference to “so-called civil rights legislation,” and the other a warning that “some courts in this country have gone too far in weakening the peace forces as against the criminal forces.” Both these lines received loud and long applause. But not from everyone. Doug Head, the young attorney general of Minnesota, who was sitting at the speaker’s table (he had introduced Nixon), demurred. “There are a lot of lawyers in this audience,” Head said, “and they don’t like it.” He meant the remarks directed at the Supreme Court. Head, like many lawyers young and old, Republican and Democrat, believes that crime in America is caused by events other than the *Miranda* or *Escobedo* cases.

Wyoming

After the North Dakota performance, it was somewhat easier to define the Nixon position. In the shorthand we use, he was now a law-and-order candidate. But was he? In Wyoming, the staff distributed a thirty-minute radio speech that he would give the next night. It was, by any account, a fine speech: compassionate, wise even, straight. CORE liked it. It spoke sense.

FRANK M. HERBERT, JR.

1921-1968

His family, his friends, his associates at the ATLANTIC and the Atlantic Monthly Press, and the publishing world suffered a cruel and untimely loss when, on May 16, Frank Herbert died after a brief illness.

A New York City native and a magna cum laude graduate of Notre Dame, he joined the ATLANTIC shortly after his World War II service in the Navy and became Circulation Manager in 1948. For years he was groomed for the responsibilities of Publisher, a job he assumed in 1965 with a characteristic mixture of decisiveness and gracefulness. A man of warm directness and honesty, he respected the reader more than the dollar, the principle more than the principal. He leapt with enthusiasm to ideas for improving the quality of the magazine, for increasing the rewards of those who write for it and the satisfactions of those who read it.

We at the ATLANTIC owe his memory much, and we will long miss him.

"For too long," Nixon said, "White America has sought to buy off the Negro — and to buy off its own sense of guilt — with ever more programs of welfare, of public housing, of payments to the poor, but not for anything except for keeping out of sight; payments that perpetuated poverty, and that kept the endless, dismal cycle of dependency spinning from generation to generation.

"Our task — our challenge — is to break this cycle of dependency, and the time to begin is now. The way to do it is not with more of the same, but by helping to bring to the ghetto the light of hope, and pride and self-respect. . . .

"Much of the black militant talk these days is actually in terms far closer to the doctrines of free enterprise than to those of the welfarist of the 30's . . . what most of the militants are asking is not separation, but to be included in — not as supplicants, but as owners, as entrepreneurs — to have a share of the wealth and a piece of the action . . . it ought to be oriented toward more black ownership, for from this can flow the rest — black pride, black jobs, black opportunity and, yes, black power. . . ."

That was quite a statement from the, ah, *bête noire* of liberalism in this country. In fact it went unnoticed for a time because the New York Times inexplicably shortened and relegated to the back pages the dispatch of its reporter covering the speech. In any event, Nixon was asked later what some of his conservative backers thought of it. He smiled, and replied the speech had some good politics in it. He thought that the conservatives could buy it, because of the emphasis on private enterprise. "It is very tough for them to be against private enterprise," he said. "You know, most of those people don't like to be called 'racists.' They want to escape that tag, if they can." The speech, he said, gave them a framework to do it.

Montana

Freeways in America are all the same — aluminum guardrails, green signs, white lettering — and so are the motels. From the deck of the Holiday Motel in Helena, you look way west at the rising land, the Big Belt mountains, and the Missouri River navigated in Montana by Lewis and Clark. Away off, the

high country was virtually uninhabited. A dry goods merchant, and member of the State Highway Commission, said that life was simpler where he lived, in a small town sixty miles away. He fished for trout five minutes away from his house. It was no place to make much money, but then there wasn't need for much money. He thought that Nixon would probably do well in Montana. People there had the feeling that the country was coming apart, that alien groups were taking it over. He and others were baffled by the turmoil in the universities. Didn't those kids, hooligans, realize that their parents had saved good money to send them to college? Anyway, it was better *here* than it was *there*.

"You have a hell of a state here," I told the commissioner.

"Don't tell anybody about it," he said.

Nixon had held a press conference that morning, and spoke of politics. He said that for Reagan or Rockefeller to be nominated there would have to be an "event." What kind of event? "Something happening to me," Nixon said. There was some confusion over exactly what he meant. Did he mean a political blunder? Or did he mean an accident — an assassination or air crash. Nearly everybody thought he meant the former, but one of his aides confided that the murder of Martin Luther King had set him to thinking of his own vulnerability. It should not have been a unique thought, as the shooting of Robert Kennedy was soon tragically to prove. Nixon went on to say that the power brokers of the West were "staying loose." He said he was not asking for commitments, nor was he receiving them. The Western mission, he went on, was a fact-finding tour. But it was clear that 1964, "when there was some pretty persuasive arm-twisting," had left its mark. None of the governors or other influential figures intended to be stampeded now. They would move to the convention as favorite sons, in order to deal. The Miami convention, Nixon concluded, "is not locked up."

"All I am asking of the governors, he said, "is that we be able to make our case at the appropriate time."

Nevada

There is no more engaging politician in America than George Ab-

Campaigning: Nixon

bott, the Republican chairman of Nevada. Abbott was full of aphorisms as Nixon met privately with the governor, Paul Laxalt. Abbott likes to think that the West will inherit the balance of political power in America, and is full of statistics to prove it. At the Republican convention, the thirteen Western states — eleven of them with Republican governors — will have 262 votes, about 40 percent of the 667 needed to nominate a candidate for President. Abbott was firm that these votes be withheld as long as it was possible to withhold them. The West could then “deal.” My impression then, as it is now, was that Abbott was not interested in the ideology of the nominee. He wanted a man who could win.

Abbott and the others from the West were being very shrewd about Nixon. Carefully neutral, they watched each squiggle on the poll charts. What would be the issue now that Lyndon Johnson had taken himself out of it? Would it be the economy or Vietnam, the cities or the Negroes (although they amounted to the same thing, in political shorthand)? Abbott didn't know then, but he was certain that the attitudes of the Western American differed from those of people who lived in the East. I had asked him, at one point, how he got on with his counterparts in the East — Republican chairmen from New England, for example.

“We get along fine,” Abbott said, “although the perspectives tend to be a bit different. Your view of life, what you think is important, is bound to be different if you live at the base of an 11,000-foot mountain — and your wife was born a Basque — than if you live, say, in West Hartford.” Not better or worse, Abbott was saying, but definitely different.

The meeting was over, and Nixon and Laxalt emerged from a side room. Both were smiling. “No commitments were asked, and none were given,” Laxalt said.

“Do not count all your votes until the hay is in the barn,” advised Chairman Abbott.

South Dakota

George Romney, when he was still a candidate, used to invite the

correspondents to the back of the bus to have a chat. It was not at all unusual to have a drink with Eugene McCarthy late at night. Robert Kennedy was the most accessible of all of them. But Nixon kept his own counsel, and the only time the correspondents saw him informally was when he came to the front of the aircraft to remark on the West and the openness of the character of Westerners.

So we came finally to the civic auditorium in Aberdeen, a building with a high, vaulted ceiling, the aspect of an aircraft hangar. There, at a \$25-a-plate dinner of Republican regulars, Richard Nixon gave the final speech of the swing. We sat back at the table and watched the crowd, watched the cigarette smoke drift upward in cumulus clouds; watched the two uniformed deputy sheriffs at a prominent table, .38's hanging from their belts, blue-and-yellow patches saying Brown County Sheriff's Office. They applauded as the local politicians were introduced. We watched the white faces, the polite applause, the satisfaction in hearing reassurances that what the country was now going through could be halted; that the clock could be turned back. It was to watch a part of America which does not have expression in the news columns of the *Washington Post* or the *New York Times*. What did they think of the country? What did they want from their leaders? From themselves? What was their estimate of the situation in America?

The Republican governor, a handsome Scandinavian named Nils Boe, presumably spoke for most of them in his toast to Nixon. “Well, it is a heartwarming sight to see a group such as yourselves gathered here in common cause,” said the governor. “You have kept burning in your hearts principles for which the country once stood and we hope will again stand . . .”

Applause.

“Americans, not hippies and not demonstrators, but people from Main Street who have been crying and praying for law and order throughout America . . .”

Applause.

“A restoration of our *principles*.”

Applause.

“A recognition of the Johnnie Johnsons and the Tommy Jacksons of America, fiscal responsibility . . . sound fundamental truths for all the

American people, and not just for certain racial, social, and economic power groups . . .”

Applause.

He introduced the speaker: “He has believed in the party, has given every ounce of energy he has to the party . . . he has dedicated his life to the United States of America, and to the principles of the Republican Party . . . the former Vice President of the United States, a candidate for the presidency of the United States, and a truly great American . . .”

Applause.

Then Nixon spoke.

—Ward S. Just

Campaigning: Humphrey

His shoulders and back have the dogged hump of a retired middle-weight who still works out on the body bag three mornings a week at the Y. But watching this candidate at work, you realize that his posture was actually molded by a generation of endless speeches in convention halls and precinct clubhouses, his shoulders set by thousands of hours of standing with his arms draped on a lectern or thrashing over his head. If he were preaching the gospel instead of politics, you could call it a pulpit slouch. The image is fitting. At fifty-seven, Vice President Hubert Horatio Humphrey is very much a preacher in the grand old mainstream tradition, modern standard revised. He is Billy Graham with an upbeat social doctrine, not so much running for President as calling us home, safely home, to be saved.

It is a style that springs naturally from the time and place of his youth, and it has served him well over the years. So well, in fact, that today it seems only fitting that the boy from behind the drug counter in Huron, South Dakota, should wow a Chamber of Commerce convention, that the Chautauqua tent and Grange hall Populist can make a Deep Southern audience jump to its feet. It is as though conservative America had finally come face to face with the conventional liberal wisdom of the past thirty-five years and discovered that it was only Hubert Humphrey. No man who smiles so much could be dangerous, and besides, Ole Hubert has changed.

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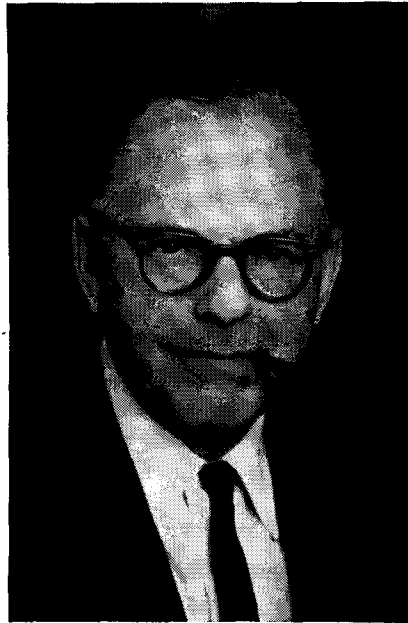
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Campaigning: Humphrey

He hasn't. Humphrey is a near miracle of consistency who after twenty years in national politics is still about where he began — slightly to the left of the Lyndon B. Johnson of 1964. Technically speaking, of course, he has had no political position of his own during his vice presidency. He has spoken for the Administration, for the President, but rarely, very rarely, for himself. It is a disquieting thought in this extraordinary year that Humphrey's greatest political asset may be the muzzle he has worn for three and one half years. Now he is free to sound exactly like Johnson without *being* him, and thus can test the thesis — as he surely intends — that the only thing most people disliked about the Johnson Administration was LBJ.

In retrospect Humphrey's decision to run seems inevitable. Yet in the first weeks of his candidacy, he seemed oddly out of control of his own fortunes — less the captain of his fate than its happy captive, less running than compelled to run. He was truly the circumstantial candidate, summoned not by a cause but by events he was powerless to control, running because Johnson would not.

Yet the same circumstances that made Humphrey a candidate soon made him a formidable one. As was clear from the start, by taking himself out of the race and moving toward peace negotiations, Johnson robbed Kennedy and McCarthy of both their fattest target and their biggest issue.

The Vice President attempted to transform himself virtually overnight from a half-comical, half-pitiable figure into an heir apparent, an emergent power in his own right. In a few weeks, in a handful of key public appearances before farmers, union members, and businessmen, Northerners and Southerners, he managed to prove his appeal to a broad cross section of his party.

Humphrey's appeal to liberals today, of course, is but a vestigial remnant of his strength with the non-Communist left throughout the 1950s. And in the eyes of many of his old allies who encamped with Kennedy or McCarthy in 1968, the new Hubert is but a vestige, morally and ideologically diminished by his years of faithful service to the Great Emasculator.

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Campaigning: Humphrey

Their case is obvious. "I will not run away from the programs of this Administration," Humphrey has time and again declared. "I do not intend to disavow either President Johnson or the Johnson-Humphrey Administration." In fact, as Vice President, Humphrey *has* embraced all of his President's programs—including the war—with a zeal that sometimes even the White House has found embarrassing.

Counterbalance

Humphrey's new strength among old enemies more than counterbalances his weakness among old friends. Once anathema to the captains of finance, he has served as a leading emissary from the Administration to the business community. Once a Dixie byword for all things detestably liberal, today he is the candidate of the South.

While the irony of his new Southern appeal is obvious, the reasons for it are less so. First, the irony: in 1948, he provoked the Dixiecrat walkout at the Democratic convention; in 1964 he pushed the civil rights bill through the Senate; but today he is the first choice of such Southerners as Governor John J. McKeithen of Louisiana and the President's conservative Texas buddy, Governor John B. Connally.

The irony diminishes when one realizes that politicians usually have reasons for what they do. The South, first of all, has perceptibly changed since 1964, and certainly since 1948. Wide-scale (by Southern standards) voter registration of Negroes has dramatically altered the tone and content of the old racial politics everywhere but Mississippi and Alabama, and there are changes even there. To the region's new-style moderate politicians—and its emergent liberals—Humphrey is no demon. Even unregenerate segregationists like Lester Maddox of Georgia have learned to tolerate Humphrey, have learned not to flinch when he throws his arm around them and welcomes them into the fold.

There is, of course, a purely negative reason for all this sweetness and light: Humphrey isn't Bobby Kennedy, Gene McCarthy—or Lyndon Johnson. He is a known quantity, predictable, and neither a "traitor"

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Campaigning: Humphrey

to his region like Johnson, an unknown "egghead" like McCarthy, nor a "ruthless" infighter like Kennedy. And Humphrey's very consistency in the cause of civil rights stands to his favor. Today he makes his best civil rights speeches in the South (a fact which became one of the first clichés of his campaign); but then, Billy Graham himself was preaching a suspiciously integrationist doctrine to mixed audiences in Alabama back in 1965. It may be only the harmless novelty of it all that brings out the crowds in Baton Rouge and Oxford, or perhaps it is Humphrey's evangelism. He offers reconciliation and redemption, and the Deep South is one part of this country where people still want, desperately want, to be saved.

Southern exposure

But finally, of course, there is the hard political reason: if Kennedy or McCarthy were leading the ticket (or Johnson, for that matter), most of the South might well be lost to George C. Wallace. That is a

prospect few regular Democrats outside Alabama find pleasing, and one they will fight to prevent. With Humphrey as the nominee, the region's "anti" vote would probably split rather evenly between Wallace and the Republicans, and the Vice President — as no one knows better than the South's Democratic pros — could end up carrying most of the old Confederacy.

From the outset, Humphrey's Southern strategy was the heart of his campaign for the nomination. The region's bloc of convention delegates was the one major power center that he could have, just for the asking, and that Kennedy could not even get near. If Humphrey was to stop the Kennedy blitz, he had to move fast, with all the steel he could muster, on his main opponent's major weakness. After nailing down the party's Southern right wing, he could then start wrestling for possession of the middle and the left.

Outside the South, his sources of support read like a guidebook to the Democratic coalition that has endured, however shakily, since the first Roosevelt Administration. Some

of the pages are missing — most Eastern intellectuals have effectively dropped out; some elements of labor are gone; unions themselves can no longer be sure they control their members; poor whites have drifted off toward Wallace; the big-city machines have all but vanished; the Negro columns are torn. But Humphrey's present and potential control of the traditional sources of Democratic power is impressive. He entered the race without Kennedy's checkbook and vaunted charisma and staff; he could never command McCarthy's youthful legions nor equal his disestablishmentarian charm. Yet in this year of the new politics, he is still the old politics' resourceful master.

Binge of prayer

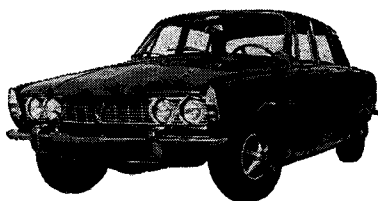
As a banquet hall preacher, his style is resoundingly eclectic. He is capable, in the same day, of quoting Tocqueville, FDR, Victor Hugo, JFK, Martin Luther King, Jr., and St. Augustine, and making them all sound like Norman Vincent Peale.

To the despair of reporters, he uses his prepared speeches much as rough notes to a sermon, following the main points more or less verbatim, but ad-libbing extended elaborations on the text. At times he seems unconscious of his audience, and rambles along as though on an exalted binge of prayer. One night in a smoky, chokingly hot motel convention hall crammed with dazed Ohio party regulars, he spoke for a solid hour from a text a staff member had clocked earlier at twelve minutes flat. His notorious long-windedness, one adviser asserts, is born more of a rural plainsman's sense of the oratorical proprieties than anything else; if people are actually going to travel to hear you speak, you might as well give them their money's worth. But even the staunchest revivalist must bend to the pressures of the age. As a concession to television, Humphrey today keeps most of his speeches under fifty minutes and wears makeup anytime there are cameramen in sight.

Yet he is obviously not a television candidate; and if enough people keep saying that, his audience may just decide it loves the way he talks and looks, much as millions of Americans every year defy all standards of critical taste or glamour

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Campaigning: Humphrey

by tuning in on Ed Sullivan. His typical live audience outside college campuses, Washington, and New York is made up largely of middle-aged couples wearing funny hats and waving stolidly straightforward signs proclaiming "Unity with HHH."

Humphrey would certainly not be a television candidate if the middle-aged didn't watch television. But things being what they are, he and his wife, Muriel, appeared once together on the *Mike Douglas Show* and drew 40,000 letters.

Another era?

Humphrey, of course, has problems, and one of them is that Lyndon Johnson long ago debased the liberal rhetoric that is Hubert's stock in trade. Johnson in 1965 could proclaim to Congress that "we shall overcome" and make it seem that a new age had dawned. Today Hubert Humphrey sings "We Shall Overcome" at a black church convention in Detroit, and it isn't even worth reporting. Johnson believed in his rhetoric, and so does Humphrey, but it doesn't really seem to matter anymore. Now that the Great Society is fading fast, the Vice President wants to replace it with the New Democracy. Johnson had to use *his* slogan in three different speeches before anyone really paid any attention to it. It took Humphrey even longer, and even after the "New Democracy" was duly enrolled with all the greats and the news of the past generation, nobody seemed really to care that another era had been born.

Playing possum?

LBJ's own attitude toward his loyal deputy has an ambiguity which is currently occupying the attention of Washington's Lyndonologists. Is he really playing possum about the Humphrey candidacy in order to stay "above politics" and work undistractedly for peace? Or is there an element of resentment of all potential successors; a reluctance to surrender power or prerogative even to a handpicked heir?

Humphrey has certainly augured few changes. In fact, the chief affliction of his campaign has been his extraordinary reluctance to engage, directly and firmly, the basic

issues of the Johnson presidency. He is not, he declares, simply going to run on the Johnson-Humphrey record, he is going to build on it. But he doesn't say in what direction. One can search the speeches of the first weeks of his campaign without finding a single idea with teeth in it.

Waiting for more

It is not that Humphrey doesn't stand for anything, but rather that he stands for so much that it all blurs, rendering him seemingly committed to few specific positions. He is on both sides of the barricades and getting away with it. In one of the first major speeches of his candidacy, he managed to come out both for "building bridges" to mainland China and shoring up the nation's defenses against the international Communist threat. The



New York Times, whose reporter had been briefed in advance, found the China policy part of the speech promising enough to play it page one, and even went so far as to take heart, on the editorial page, at Humphrey's courageous gesture. Without benefit of briefing, the Washington Post played the story the opposite way; both papers were right.

His position on the Kerner Commission riot report has been equally elusive. First it seemed he felt the report was too harsh. Then Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated, and in a truly moving and eloquent speech before some Long Island businessmen, Humphrey called for full implementation of the report's recommendations. Since then he has vacillated. On occasion he says that the Kerner Report was, in effect, simply a national "health report" and "not an obituary"; with the right diet and a little fresh air, we should get well soon.

In the same vein, the candidate of happiness and joy can affably ob-

serve that "the best foreign policy that America could have is a successful, humane domestic policy," that "the best thing about the War on Poverty is that it was started." One waits for more, but it so seldom comes.

As for the war, the central issue of the campaign, Humphrey has decided simply to ignore it by emphasizing what he foresees for the post-war period. The nation, he says, must not lapse into another post-Korea slump after the boys come home from Saigon, and his point is well put and well taken. But he does not say how he will get the boys home.

Yet Humphrey's refusal to engage the substantive issues has made excellent tactical sense. His first priority was wooing and winning delegates, who are usually impressed less by issues than by the ability to win. Kennedy could attack him as the candidate of "pabulum and tranquilizers," but he was on the outside trying to get in. Early in the campaign, Humphrey simply made a flat policy decision that he would not discuss issues in detail until after the primaries were over.

Goodwill

The Vice President and his advisers are acutely aware that, for the first time in his political career, Humphrey and his times are converging. Today he is neither too early nor too late; the question now is whether he and the people he is speaking to can recapture their own relevance, which is another way of asking whether the old system is going to work.

There will be plenty of time for Humphrey to show where he stands on the issues. The real question now is where the country stands and where it will stand at the end of the summer. Most of Humphrey's people are like most people in the United States — white, middle-class, middle-aged — and now they feel buffeted by the black and the poor and the young. Humphrey's gift as a preacher is that he can infuse these people with a kind of undifferentiated goodwill that can seem as exalting as grace. It doesn't necessarily last long, or show itself in works, but at the very least it is a warm and friendly sensation.

In a country suddenly so in need of bonds, that seems not too modest a start.

— Philip D. Carter

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Yugoslavia

A political analyst who often appears on Yugoslav television remarked recently that the greatest achievements of Yugoslav foreign policy since the war were not getting Albania, not getting Trieste, and being expelled from the Cominform. This kind of appraisal, slightly ironic and self-deprecating, but acute, realistic, and above all, tough-minded, is characteristic of much of Yugoslav thinking. Translated into action, this sort of *Realismus* means that most intelligent Yugoslavs accept, often despite themselves, the overriding need for a kind of national unity — and as a corollary to that need, there has been an acceptance of the role, in earlier days, of the Communists and Tito, and now of Tito alone, as the foremost instrument for welding that unity.

It is first of all as a multinational state that Yugoslavia must be understood. There are the six republics: Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia — the dominant three; Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina — the poorer relations. Each feels itself an entity, historically, culturally, economically, in a way difficult to understand for any American not from Dixie. Add to this the complicating factors of three major religions, two alphabets, three (or four) languages besides the dominant Serbo-Croatian (the Serbs and Croats are periodically at one another's throats over whether it is indeed one language or two), and seven borders to defend (more than any other country in Europe). There are also the differing consequences of the long Austro-Hungarian and Turkish dominations, the split between an agricultural southern backland and a more economically advanced north, the relationship of internationalist ideals to thorny indigenous problems, an uncertain position between the two superpowers, the struggle between the generations, and more.

Favored areas

Consider briefly only the agrarian-industrial dilemma. Crossing from Austria to Yugoslavia into Slovenia, the richest republic, one is struck by how little mechanization is evident on the land — not a tractor in sight for hundreds of kilometers. Yet the north and its peasantry are certainly

prosperous compared with the south. The northern industrial centers and the big cities are relatively favored by history and geography and might conceivably reach their economic takeoff points before too long. But what is the regime to do with the poor peasantry and the struggling cities in the rest of the country? To take support away from the favored areas might very likely slow down the economic growth of the country as a whole, yet it is humanly desirable (and politically very expedient) to come to the aid of the impoverished sections. A centuries-old peasant economy is becoming rapidly urbanized, with all the attendant problems of overcrowding, filth, housing, traffic, social adjustment.

What then is to be done, and is there the cash to do it with? What seems to be happening is an effort to do everything at once, within a context of limited resources and limited experience. So Yugoslav life today is replete with temporary expedients, *ad hoc* solutions, pragmatic methods. That is the explanation for the recent economic reforms, in the shape of well-publicized moves away from old-fashioned Marxist economics and toward decentralization. Profit and loss incentives are replacing government supports and subsidies, in order to weed out inefficiency and featherbedding. An expanding tourist trade to bring in needed foreign currency is emphasized, as is a free-market economy for the peasants.

A presence

Tito has made significant reforms in the political as well as the economic structure. Entrenched bureaucrats are rotated periodically; he has removed Aleksandar Ranković, a hard-liner of the old school, and downgraded his secret police. The prestige even of the League of Communists (which was a watered-down version of the earlier Party) has withered. All this loosening up, along with economic decentralization and reforms, has weakened the basis upon which much of the semblance of national unity was built. What remains is Tito.

Josip Broz Tito is a considerable figure, staring out of thousands of portraits in barbershops, banks, and fruit stores in his double-breasted ample suits and uniforms. Not Big Brother exactly, not the Leader,



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Yugoslavia

in quite that sense; more a presence, a figure on the order of Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin, out of a mythic past. Whether or not he is George Washington, Lenin, Father, Uncle all in one, or simply vain, shrewd, and tough, he has survived and endured, and brought his country with him.

Everyone, of course, is concerned about what will happen after his death. In the absence of any commanding figure (Kardelj of Slovenia was at one time a frequently mentioned possibility as successor), one plausible view is that a committee kind of leadership, on the Soviet model, may well emerge. The great irony is that the only other national figure of comparable charisma is probably Milovan Djilas. Hardly a Yugoslav is willing to say that Djilas has any chance at all to succeed to power or even to get back into public life. Djilas himself claims an interest only in his literary work. But stranger things are happening in Eastern Europe.

The question of power may finally be resolved by economics rather than ideology. If the dinar is strong, if the reforms work and the economy booms, then the struggle for power should not be too acute; in economic weakness, however, lies the ground for either disintegration or a strong hand, an alternative that the long-suffering Yugoslav people can do without.

Still watching

As for Mihajlo Mihajlov, the young university instructor currently in jail for publishing a book offensive to the Russians at a time when relations between the two countries were especially delicate, he is not taken seriously as a writer or thinker — at best a shadow of his idol Djilas. But his persecution has been a source of pain and embarrassment to all liberals. They think it is clearly ridiculous to keep him in jail.

But that no strongly organized expression of this sentiment has appeared is a black mark against the intellectual community. The most cynical view I heard in Yugoslavia was that this imprisonment has been the making of Mihajlov: he had had little academic future in Yugoslavia, but now, after his release, he will

surely wind up with at least an assistant professorship somewhere in the United States. A tough-minded people.

This kind of offhandedness, or evasiveness, betrays a real uneasiness. Unquestionably, Mihajlov's imprisonment forces every Yugoslav to consider the limits of his own literary, personal, and political freedom. Yugoslavia's continuing theoretical and practical attacks upon the orthodox tenets of sovietized Marxism — at the present moment, there is a controversy among Yugoslav Communists about starting a two-party (albeit both "Socialist") system — pose a problem for Russians as well as Yugoslavs. If Yugoslav successes materialize, they will



represent a dangerous precedent to the restive and watchful Eastern countries (as recent events in Czechoslovakia show), let alone to their own intelligentsia. In certain circumstances it is useful to the Soviets to promote the latitudinarian notion of "many paths to socialism." Yet it is clearly discomfiting to them to see that elastic clause stretched beyond their point of recognition, and influence. The Soviet outrage over Mihajlov's book — which, after all, contained nothing startlingly new or threatening — may have been a diplomatic anger designed to force Tito into a public acknowledgment of Soviet weight, prestige, influence. Big Brother is still watching you.

All of this does not mean, as some traditional anti-Communists still argue, that Yugoslavia's independence from Moscow is largely mythical. Conversely, many liberal critics of

our Vietnam policy cite Yugoslavia as a quasi-neutralist ideal that could serve as a model for a new American policy in Southeast Asia. Despite the undeniable merits and attractions of this latter view, much about Yugoslavia suggests that the latter is *sui generis*. The Yugoslavs are independent, but they are also hemmed in by the realities of their history and geography. As nations must be to survive, they can be realistic — they know there is a Soviet air force in Hungary. But they also know there is a NATO force in Italy, and that Greece and Turkey are NATO allies. So they negotiate and maneuver among various alternatives, within limits, and in the old diplomatic tradition of pursuing what they regard as their own interests. The clinching argument about their ability to sustain a quasi-neutralist position is that they succeeded in doing just that, the hard way, against Stalin and Stalinism; there is no reason to suppose they will readily or for questionable ideological motives yield, in the present historical situation, the opportunity of independent action and thought to less iron-fisted types.

Rational and distant

In Yugoslavia last year there was a refreshing lack of cant in discussion of Vietnam. One would expect sympathy for the NLF to be especially strong in Yugoslavia, if only because of the comparisons to be made with the conditions of their own Partisan war. (Much is still made, and justly, of those incredible days upon which so much of the Yugoslav capacity for independence rests — although the young people have just about had that from the older generation. Topical joke: six men from the village went off to fight with the Partisans; four were killed; after the war eight returned.) A whopping demonstration was mounted by the students of Zagreb last fall against the American role in Vietnam. But after the demonstrators broke the consulate windows, the melee turned into a fight between the kids and the cops. There is a great deal of media coverage of the war, with documentary film from the NLF on television. Nevertheless, it is true that Vietnam is even further away from their concerns than it used to be from ours.

Almost all those I talked with were predictably opposed to America's actions, although not one was

vociferously so. There never was a sense of *moral* indignation. American intervention may have been opposed, but never because it was “wrong” — such words are naïve in a country whose history has been nothing but betrayals, aggressions, power politics. Most frequently, the war was opposed because it was *stupid*. If it was wrong, it was because the action was not commensurate with America’s role as a great power. Did the United States *really* want a war with China? Our actions made no sense in any other terms, and on those terms were insane. The feeling was that America would move, or more accurately, perhaps, be moved, to take a saner position, one more beneficial to itself and to the world. Very rational — and very distant.

Tito and Nasser

The Middle East crisis was a different kettle of fish. Closer to home, the fears and emotions aroused by that conflict have not yet abated. Tito directed Yugoslavia’s foreign policy toward the most immediate and extreme pro-Arab and pro-Nasser position of the Eastern and Communist countries’. In line with Yugoslavia’s policy of supporting third-force nations in order to give themselves more leverage in dealing with the two superpowers, Tito last year signed a friendship and trade pact with India and Egypt. Still the depth and sincerity of Tito’s commitment to Nasser after the war broke out did surprise some observers.

Unquestionably Yugoslav intellectuals — certainly the non-Communist ones (which means the bulk of them) — are more pro-Israel than is the official line. One of them told me, “It would be impossible for any thinking and feeling person who knows what was done to the Jews — as we do — to be unsympathetic to Israel.” There are only about 7500 Jews left in Yugoslavia, from a pre-war total of about 80,000; the other 7500 who survived chose to go to Israel after the war. There is no overt or officially condoned anti-Semitism in the country. There are Jews in high academic, political, and military positions. It seems to the intellectuals to be difficult to follow Tito’s anti-Israel line without sounding anti-Jewish, anti-Semitic, chauvinistic. Such an unhealthy tone, I was told, was creeping into some of the local newspapers in Zagreb —

the latter leaped gleefully into a denunciation of “Israeli aggression.” What upset thoughtful Yugoslavs was that this sentiment fed upon older Croatian nationalist, Catholic, right-wing sentiments still present in that area. An apparently safe political position — pro-Nasserism — may actually prove very sensitive domestically.

Ironic threat

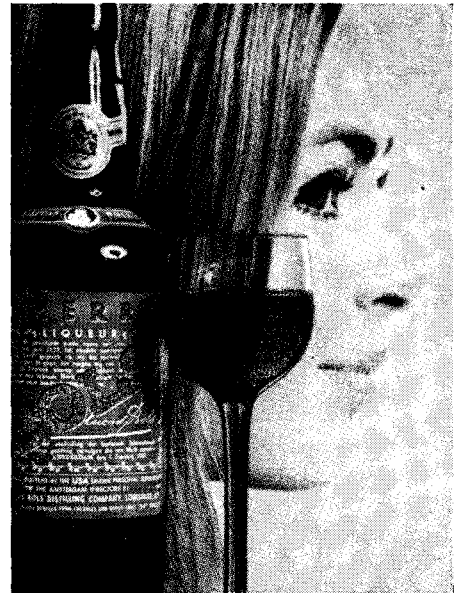
More significant, as a result of the June, 1967, war, Yugoslavia’s basic security and latitude for maneuver may be more gravely compromised than they have been at any other time since 1948. Ironically, the source of the threat is not the one anticipated in some quarters when Israel defeated the Arabs, of an arrogant and triumphant American dominance in the Middle East, but rather the new and menacing presence of Soviet power in the Mediterranean. Tito’s advocacy of a strong anti-Israel position must have seemed at the time to satisfy a vestigial ideological need (to be for the “progressive” forces in the world) and to promise a strengthening of Yugoslav credit among neutralist and the ever suspicious Communist nations. So Tito the shrewd diplomatist may have allowed a strictly personal commitment to Nasser to carry him too far, blinding him to Mediterranean realities and his own country’s best interest.

Now for the first time, there could be Soviet submarines in the Adriatic, a prospect as displeasing to Yugoslavia, one can be sure, as to Italy and us. Is it an accident that Bulgaria chooses this moment to renew its claims upon Macedonia, or that the Soviet Union snubs Yugoslavia at the Budapest conference? The rumblings in Czechoslovakia and Poland are loud. Once more the chess game of Balkan and Eastern European politics intensifies.

— Jules Chametzky

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

Ward S. Just, a previous contributor, is covering the campaign for the Washington Post. Philip D. Carter is a Washington-based correspondent for NEWSWEEK. Jules Chametzky teaches English at the University of Massachusetts and edits the MASSACHUSETTS REVIEW; he has recently been in Yugoslavia.



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the mail

The wrong Rubicon

SIR: Thank you for Tom Wicker's survey and analysis in "The Wrong Rubicon: LBJ and the War" (May *Atlantic*). It needs no commendation, but perhaps an addition would help to clarify both the Kennedy-Johnson relationship and the late President's agony over Vietnam.

True, Kennedy "started" some of it, or went along, but at the time of his death there still were only 16,000 Americans there, all on advisory and training assignments, and he certainly had not decided upon such vast escalation as we have seen, had not, in fact, *decided* upon any direct military action.

I think it is enlightening to read Schlesinger's *A Thousand Days* on this point. After the Johnson trip in 1961, the author comments that "the broad alternatives ranged from Lyndon Johnson's recommendation of a major American commitment to Chester Bowles' idea . . ." (shades of the 1964 campaign).

Two pages later, Kennedy has just read the Taylor-Rostow report and Schlesinger quotes him: "'They want a force of American troops,' he told me early in November. 'They say it's necessary in order to restore confidence and maintain morale. But it will be just like Berlin. The troops will march in; the bands will play; the crowds will cheer; and in four days everyone will have forgotten. Then we will be told we have to send in more troops. It's like taking a drink. The effect wears off, and you have to take another.'"

Let's give the tragic President his due.

ELTON T. GUSTAFSON
Jensen Beach, Fla.

SIR: The words of Tom Wicker featured on the cover of your May issue are more rhetoric than fact.

He implies that the bombing of North Vietnam made the war more bloody than it would otherwise have been; yet our military leaders have all insisted that the bombing has

made the war less bloody in terms of American lives lost. Mr. Wicker's own evidence shows that Hanoi planned full intervention before the bombing, thinking that it had the "green light," and he recognizes that a military response was necessary; but he yields to the temptation of a theatrical flourish in condemning the "ebullience" of President Johnson in making the response that he did.

JOHN E. HANKINS
Orono, Me.

SIR: To castigate on your cover the President of our country is unwarranted and offensive.

MARIAN K. IVES
South Londonderry, Vt.

SIR: Have you people all taken leave of your senses?

MRS. H. E. CHRISTENSEN
Snohomish, Wash.

The rhetoric of freedom

SIR: I would like to express my sincere appreciation for Richard Rovere's "Freedom: Who Needs It?" and also for "You Can't Act Without Getting Your Hands Dirty" by Jacques Ellul (May *Atlantic*). These essays are not only articulate, brilliant, and perceptive, but also courageous — in view of the fashionable, though ineffectual and ephemeral, "commitment" to which many of this country's academic, liberal intellectuals would subscribe without really knowing what the hell they are doing to themselves and to their intellectual integrity.

RICHARD E. KIM
Amherst, Mass.

SIR: Richard Rovere's thought-provoking article slightly misses the mark for some of us. If my draft board fails to recognize the sincerity of my pacifistic convictions or the utility of my scientific research to the "community need," I almost certainly will be locked up in a federal prison for refusing to aid or

abet the immoral Vietnam War. Once I'm imprisoned, Rovere's observation that "my freedom of action is probably greater than any that has ever before existed in an organized society" would seem hardly relevant, even if true. Disappointed as I am in the ineffectiveness of protest against war and racism, I feel the issue is not "failure to prevail through freedom" (such as it is), but rather the *gross lack* of freedom which still persists in many aspects of our lives and for many of our citizens.

CLARK R. CHAPMAN
Cambridge, Mass.

SIR: In reading Richard Rovere's apology for his old-fashioned version of freedom, I am reminded of the finding by the Snodgrass Institute for Cultural Research that beautiful writing and clear thinking have only a 14 percent correlation. I do appreciate Mr. Rovere's fashionable attitude toward learning — namely, that one should be familiar with, but uninfluenced by, worthwhile thoughts.

ALBERT LILLIEFORS
Lansing, Mich.

SIR: "It could be worse" has never been a particularly convincing argument for anything, yet Richard Rovere offers little more than that in his "defense" of liberty. He seems more effective at depicting the frustrations of liberty in our country than he is at championing its preservation.

NANCY PAXGIA
Iowa City, Iowa

Can Bill Buckley save Yale?

SIR: William F. Buckley, Jr. ("What Makes Bill Buckley Run," April *Atlantic*), as candidate for the Yale Corporation (read also: candidate for public attention) is perhaps, as he claims, an enlightened Oedipus in a world of Creons — the exception being that his rationale calls for the



The VC10: a great step backwards in aviation.

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making of his mother and the plucking of our eyes.

JOHN F. LEHMAN
Heidelberg, Germany

SIR: If William Buckley wishes to extend the influence of Yale University, would he not better achieve that by supporting the admission of graduates of P.S. 167 instead of sons of alumni, who hopefully have already acquired most of the advantages of a Yale education through imitation of their fathers?

JOHN A. DESMOND
Ridley Park, Penn.

More on James Thomson

SIR: James C. Thomson, Jr.'s "How Could Vietnam Happen?" (April *Atlantic*) struck me as a brilliant piece of analysis, worth more than any of the ponderous works of research teams on how decisions are made in government.

The present Administration's policies in Vietnam are the logical outgrowth of policies that go back more than two decades. From the outset of the war in Vietnam to the 1950s, the United States was in conflict with the tide of nationalism in Vietnam, thanks in large part to the special influence of Foreign Service Officers who saw the world primarily through European, and especially French, eyes. John Foster Dulles, when he became Secretary of State in 1953, was determined to give more weight to Asian considerations (probably to show that he represented a change from Mr. Acheson), but the opportunity to come to terms with Vietnamese nationalism, of which Ho Chi Minh has been the leading expression, was rejected again. The reason this time was that doctrinaire anti-Communism, with Joseph McCarthy riding high, reigned supreme on the Hill, and, with Dulles as an apostle, in the Department following his installation. Such at least is the impression I had while I was in the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, close to Vietnam, between 1946 and 1954.

If our course of action in Vietnam represents the most discreditable and self-defeating undertaking in foreign affairs in our history, as to me it does, I believe the press must bear much of the blame for our pursuing it. The press's fault has been its addiction to journalism. For years what we have been given

on Vietnam is the "story," in all its angles and with the full cast of personalities. What the press has neglected to do, what it has failed to force the politicians to do, is to dig down to the fundamental issues, to determine what the war in Vietnam is at bottom about and hence what policy the United States should adopt toward it in the light of the kind of world it is trying to bring into being and of the principles it is trying, or ought to be trying, to establish as governing the conduct of nations.

CHARLTON OGBURN, JR.
Oakton, Va.

Familiar admonitions

SIR: Your feature in the May *Atlantic*, "Sorel's Unfamiliar Quotations," was very clever, and amusing to say the least.

SUSAN MAGOWAN
Boston, Mass.

SIR: I should like to congratulate you on the introduction of Mr. Sorel's caricatures. In view of the recent upsurge of interest in caricature, which seems to be a symptom of contemporary cultural collapse (as was the era of Gillray, Hogarth, and Rowlandson), I think it vital that "major" periodicals present such satiric comment to the masses.

H. JAMES CLARK
Department of English
Wayne State University
Detroit, Mich.

SIR: The new addition to the *Atlantic* is already one of its best features. I hope that you will continue to include Sorel's Unfamiliars.

BARNEY OLDFIELD
Boston, Mass.

SIR: I have been a reader of the *Atlantic* since my boyhood, and I'm now seventy-nine. I must confess I am very much displeased by your clever caricature of Billy Graham.

I wouldn't expect the *Atlantic* to like the orthodoxy of Billy Graham, but I would expect you to be fair-minded. Billy Graham's present-day activity is not aimed at getting money; his association is strictly organized, and he himself and all his associates receive a salary.

Saint Paul warned the Romans that "even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind." One of the aims of Billy Graham's

ministry is to get people to have God in their knowledge, and one would hope it might slow the trend toward turmoil. It ill becomes the *Atlantic* to misrepresent and belittle a man doing such a noble work.

S. EARL DUBBEL
Huntingdon, Penn.

SIR: I'm still laughing at that one on Billy Graham. Keep it up.

WILLIAM F. BENNETT
Fort Worth, Tex.

Advice and consent

SIR: Thanks for starting my May a little bit better with Alfred Mayor's delightful article on WBAI ("Radio Free New York"). Memories of Larry the J. and his toasted, buttered bagels brought tears of joy to my eyes. How I miss the way he used to bring the very hills alive (in Suffolk County, that is — I used to pick him up way out there) with the sound of slurping! How Dallas needs a "free radio" of its own!

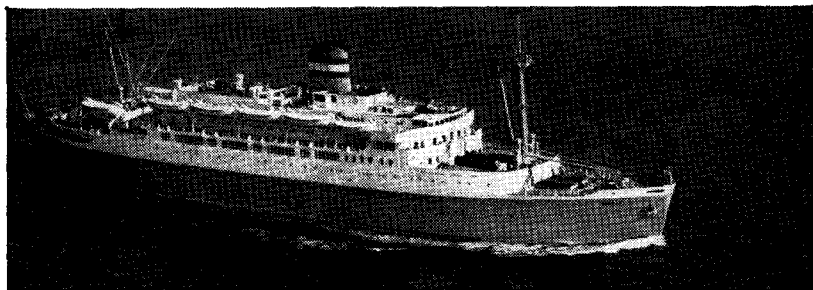
But you failed to mention the grandest moment in the station's history, the week it canceled all programming to stage a marathon to raise (I think) some \$50,000 to replace some badly aged broadcasting equipment (but not that squeaky chair). This was the week that brought forth many wonders theretofore unheard of, such as Arlo Guthrie's spontaneously performed first version of "Alice's Restaurant," much funnier than the version now being heard throughout the country, and the Margaret Hamilton-like silken tones of the last of the castrati sopranos, Tiny Tim.

Dale Minor and crew, Larry the J. chief among them, devised many heinous schemes during the week to extract change from long-suffering listener-masochists; but most memorable was the hour when Minor and (I think) Steve Post threatened to alternate playings of Kate Smith's version of "The Green Berets" with Everett McKinley Dirksen reciting "Gallant Men" for as long as it took listeners to come across with a measly \$500. It only took an hour.

DAN BATES
Dallas, Tex.

SIR: Liz Drew's piece ("On Giving Oneself a Hotfoot: Government by Commission," May *Atlantic*) had a nice, tart flavor. It neglects, however, one of the more interesting bits of commission-watching — the

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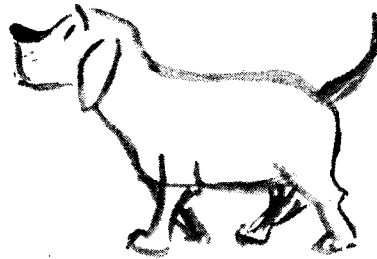


fact that the President obviously made a serious error in attempting to ignore the riot report. Whatever the weaknesses of that document — and there are many — the fact is that it struck a major chord in the national conscience and did much to set the terms of the current political debate. The moral, in short, is that the commission gambit sometimes goes awry.

VICTOR PALMIERI
Deputy Executive Director
The National Advisory Commission
on Civil Disorders
Malibu, Calif.

SIR: Donald R. Shanor's report on Hungary (May *Atlantic*) is undoubtedly the most explicit explanation of Hungary's New Economic Mechanism to date. However, Kadar did not forget that the factory workers must be fed.

The New Economic Mechanism, inaugurated in January, provides much greater incentives for collective farms, coupled with greater financial responsibility. Under the new system, the farm boss has the power to buy and sell for his farm and even to decide the amount of each crop he will plant. The state will set price ceilings on meats, sugar, tobacco, and wheat. It will set up the maximum and minimum prices for vegetables, fruits, and wines. Fowl and eggs, along with all goods produced by the farmer on his private plot, will retain free prices. The collective can now even help the



farmer on his private plot by providing fertilizers, seeds, plowing, reaping, and transport. In addition, credit funds have been established to enable farmers privately to buy equipment and supplies.

The culminating point in the program will be the year-end balancing of books. At year's end the farm will figure up its total outlay (including funds for next year's machinery) and subtract this from the total income. If the remainder is a positive amount, the money will be divided by the total number of "work-units" worked on the farm. The individual will be paid for his total "work-units." Kadar's economists, led by Imre Vajda, say the system will work if given a chance. If the Mechanism fails, Hungary could be in for another spell of enforced centralization.

JOHN C. GARLINGTON
Sherman, Tex.

SIR: Your May issue contained a letter from J. David Colfax, Department of Sociology at the University of Connecticut. Professor Colfax's comments on Judge Wyzanski's "On Civil Disobedience" (February *Atlantic*) were not the idle prattlings of a bystander.

Professor Colfax turned in his draft card at the Pentagon (October, 1967) as a form of protest against our involvement in Vietnam. Although he is thirty-two years old, married, and the father of two children, his Pittsburgh draft board saw

fit to relieve him of his 3A classification. He was reclassified 1A and subsequently ordered to report for induction in April, 1968. An appeal for reclassification was denied.

While many of his colleagues disagreed with the particular form of Colfax's war protest, they were appalled by the punitive action taken by his draft board. Consequently, many have contributed to a legal defense fund set up in his behalf. To date only \$1700 of the estimated \$4500 needed for legal costs has been collected.

PETER V. JODAITIS, JR.
Treasurer, David Colfax Legal Defense Fund
Storrs, Conn.

SIR: I was (and still am!) completely unprepared for "The Prepared Piano" by Babette Deutsch, in your May issue. Perhaps this is because I'm not a piano but am, instead, a flesh-and-blood human being who was able to stretch out a flesh-and-blood arm and grasp, with flesh-and-blood fingers, the April *Atlantic* and reread with relief, thankfulness, and unabashed emotion the very human poems of Leslie Norris.

JOANNA D. SNIDECOR
Jackson, Mich.

SIR: Answering Richard O'Connell's "To a Too Persistent Protégé" (May *Atlantic*):

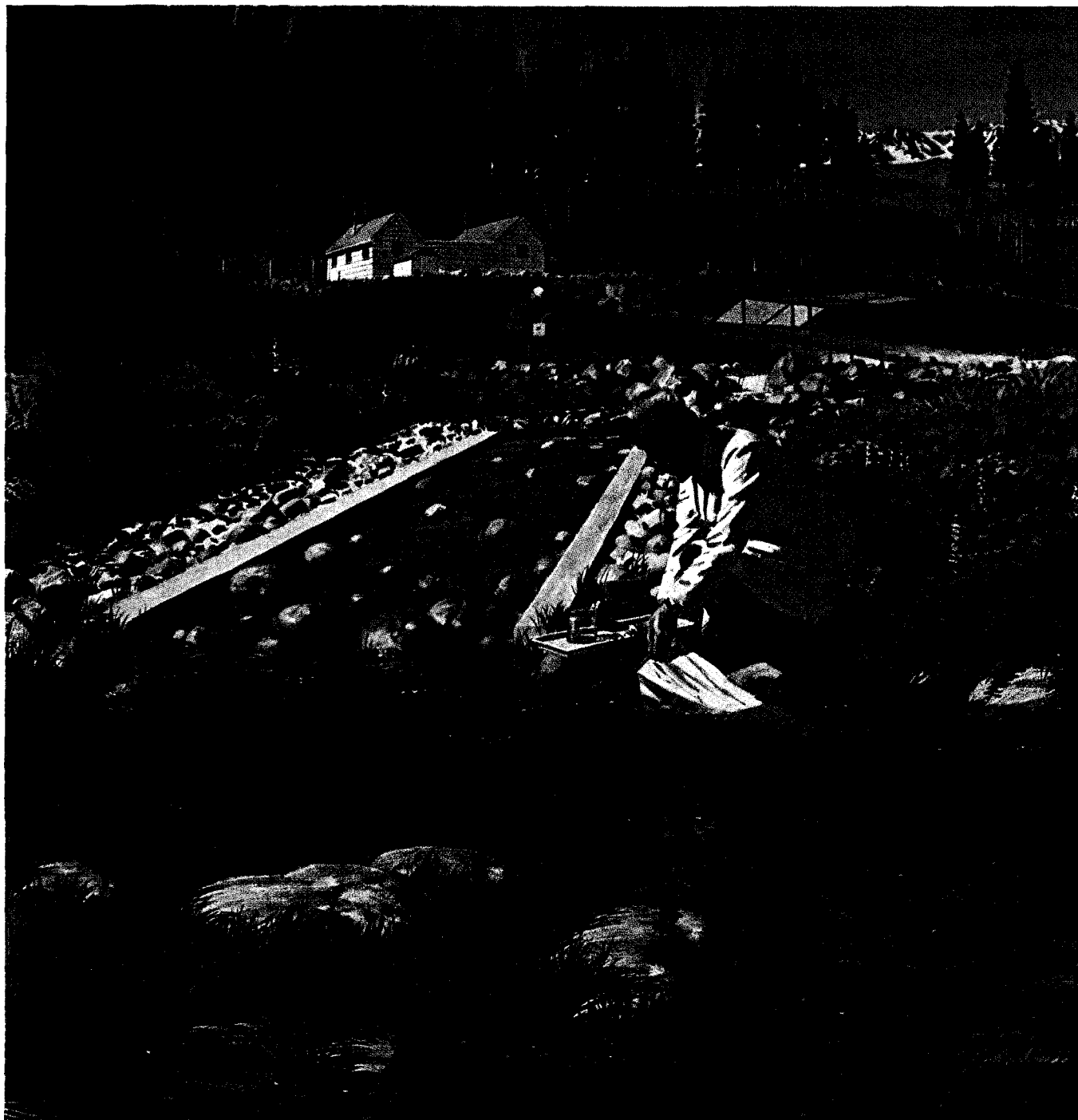
O'Connell Shrugged
Pale Poetess
with hope will grope
(though Richard may grow
frantic)
For just Two Lines
of verse, and be
as he, in the *Atlantic*.

CORINNE GEETING
Carmichael, Calif.

Credit Where Due Department

Richard Rovere's article "Freedom: Who Needs It?", which appeared in the May *ATLANTIC*, is one of several essays to be published later this year by Atheneum, for Metromedia, Inc., in a book called *AMERICA NOW*.

An inadvertently garbled passage on page 48 of the June *ATLANTIC* describing the diversified economic interests of weekly newsmagazines should have read, "The weekly newsmagazine field is dominated by *TIME*, *NEWSWEEK*, and *U.S. NEWS*. The first two also control substantial broadcast, newspaper or book publishing outlets, and *TIME* is also in movies (MGM) and is hungry for three or four newspapers."



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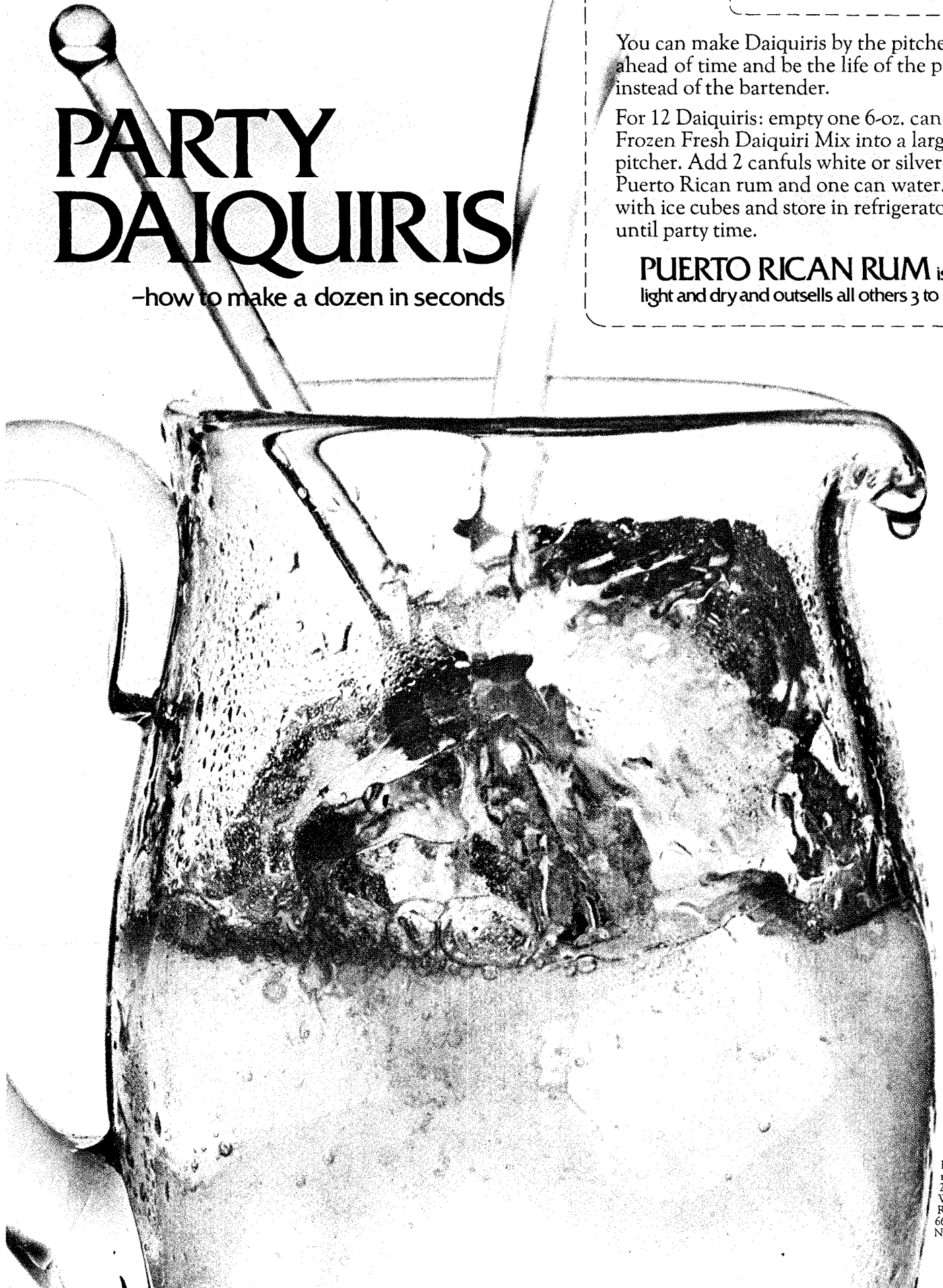
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Bill Moyers talks about LBJ, Power, Poverty, War, and the Young

At thirty-four, Bill Moyers has completed, for the moment, a remarkable career in government, and become publisher of Long Island's successful daily, Newsday. Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson brought Moyers to Washington from Texas when he was twenty-five; one year later President Kennedy made him a director of the newly founded Peace Corps. At twenty-eight, early in 1963, he became its deputy director. The day after the assassination of President Kennedy, Moyers moved over to the White House as special assistant to the new President, and in 1965 Mr. Johnson made Moyers White House Press Secretary. LBJ permits few intimates the indulgence of talking and acting independently, but Moyers, as the press was quick to note, was an exception. He was offered a position of trust, and authorized to do more than "just follow orders," and he accepted that mandate.

Many who have read about him say they have an image of a bright but rather pious, earnest young man selling LBJ Texas-style. Educated at the University of Texas, serious and dedicated, Moyers is also irreverent, frank, original in his thinking, and given to dry and ironic wit — all of which is reflected here. He does not preach or pretend. He knows he was lucky to have had the experience of power so young, but he comes out of it as unawed with his own

prominence as with power itself. Earlier this year he agreed to talk with me and a tape recorder in relaxed fashion at his Garden City, Long Island, home. We agreed to look at the results together and consider whether we thought they deserved to see the light of day. Here they are.

— Michael Janeway

Was there an element of American overconfidence about the use of power in the origins of the Vietnam War? That is, was there confidence that the war was something we could handle well and easily and quickly? There has been suspicion that Johnson was planning a giant war.

I am sure he didn't expect a giant war, much less plan it. No, as I recall, there was an unspoken assumption in Washington that a major war was something that could be avoided if we injected just a little power at a time. There was an assumption that the people in Hanoi would interpret the beginning of the bombing and the announcement of a major buildup as signals of resolve on our part which implied greater resistance to come if they did not change their plans. There was an assumption that they feared we *might* use the power available to us; an assumption that they were probing to see if in fact we *would*. There was a belief that if we

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indicated a willingness to use our power, they would get the message and back away from an all-out confrontation. As late as April, 1965, in his Baltimore speech, three months before he decided to begin the massive buildup, the President still held to the hope that he could tempt the North Vietnamese in another direction. You may remember, he spoke of turning the whole Mekong Delta region into an Asian TVA, and held out the possibility of Hanoi's sharing in the fruits of such a venture. As late as that spring he was hoping to avoid a wider war. There were some people, a few, who felt intervention in a big way was inevitable, because in their view Armageddon was upon us in Asia. They had no doubts about the efficacy of American power in Vietnam; had it failed anywhere before? Ironically, these were civilians, by and large. Someone at a dinner party once suggested to one of them that it might take as long to rid Vietnam of guerrillas as it did Malaya. He arched an eyebrow and replied: "We are *not* the British." There was a confidence — it was never bragged about, it was just there — a residue, perhaps, of the confrontation over the missiles in Cuba — that when the chips were really down, the other people would fold.

I had thought the escalation decisions were made at the start of 1965, and that the April speech was a kind of statement of regret.

No, not at all. If you recall, the bombing decision had been made in February — the decision to bomb North Vietnam in retaliation for raids against American billets in the South. Some people suspected about that time that large numbers of troops would soon be on the way, but even then the President was — we were *all* — caught up in presenting the Great Society legislation to Congress. Through the winter Vietnam seemed to be more of a nuisance than a menace; the President really believed there would be some alternative right up to the last minute, until July of 1965. Many people in Washington were beginning to assume by midspring that there would be a large commitment of troops, but the decision had not been made by the time of the Baltimore speech. It was still hoped that the bombing of the North would ring the alarm in Hanoi and cause them to call off their direct support of the Viet Cong. You have to keep in mind that the President was suspicious that the North Vietnamese, and possibly the Soviet Union, had misinterpreted the American political campaign the year before. He used to say that they listened to only half of what he said, the half about no wider war, and that they had been fooled by the results of that campaign into thinking that Americans wanted peace at any price in Asia. I suspect there was truth to that. There were gross miscalculations on both sides,

on our side and on their side as well. Each underestimated the other's tenacity.

Then doesn't it become a bluff game, in which you are confident about your ability to use your power? But somewhere in demonstrating your power the game takes on a momentum of its own, and each gambit plays into the next gambit, and you don't really ever win what you thought you were going to win in the previous gambit.

Well, you keep raising your stakes because you don't see how that other fellow could possibly be a match for you; he must be bluffing.

General Gavin has said that as long ago as the early fifties, and during the period leading up to Dienbienphu, it was either articulated or unarticulated doctrine in the Pentagon that long range, China was the enemy. Were you conscious of such a premise at the time the decisions were made in 1965?

Once again it was a felt rather than an articulated assumption. China was on the minds of some people, especially the theorists, but China was rarely discussed in those deliberations early in 1965. The inseparable link, in the minds of the people at the top, ran from the Viet Cong to Hanoi, and there was one overriding concern — to prevent Saigon from falling to the Communists. This is how the issue was first presented to President Johnson, after he assumed office in November, 1963. Secretary McNamara came back a few weeks later from one of his visits to Saigon with a very gloomy picture of the prospects out there. He told the President that the Viet Cong had made far greater progress in the six months from midsummer until December of 1964 than anyone in Washington had expected they would make or could make. And the President was told that unless something was done to reverse the deterioration within the next few months, he could expect the Viet Cong to succeed in taking over South Vietnam. Well, the decision was made at that time to reaffirm to the government in Saigon (I think it was the Khanh government, because I remember we had a saying that if Khanh can't, then who can?) the basic U.S. commitment to Vietnam. And it was not in terms of the threat of China, but in terms of the prospects of a Viet Cong victory. That meant, to these men, a Communist victory. Obviously there were some who believed North Vietnam was China's proxy. They were arguing in 1961 and 1962 that if North Vietnam took over South Vietnam, it would prove that Mao was right about the doctrine of the war of national liberation, and that it would tease the Chinese forward. They argued from China's rhetoric; they pointed to Indonesia and to the incidents

along the Indian border; they punctuated the atmosphere in Washington with warnings that China was willing to fight to the last Vietnamese — all of this to buttress their claim that China was an expansionist power. But in the deliberations of 1965 the President felt he was faced with a fact and not a theory, and that fact, as he saw it, was the imminent collapse of a non-Communist government.



When somebody examines an Administration strategic point of view and challenges it absolutely, does this get listened to, does this get debated? Did George Ball do this when he was Undersecretary of State? What about the ability of the Senate critics to argue a basic disagreement?

Yes, I think George Ball admits that he had every opportunity to make his case. He was urged to speak up. He and others were heard; their arguments were listened to. Obviously they were not accepted. Now, the views of the Senate, the views of the Congress, were not always brought into the process of decision-making at a point where they could be a critical factor. They were largely heard just prior to the point of decision, after the Administration had debated the matter internally, when the inevitability of the decision was already apparent to those who had been taking part. The President tried to get as much advice from senators as he could, but you have to remember that a President's tendency is to give the weight of his attention to his own advisers. There are several reasons why this is so, including the belief that his men are dealing with facts and senators with opinions. Also, you must remember that any group of senators called to the White House for consultation is hopelessly divided. Fulbright and Mansfield in the same room with Dirksen and Stennis?

Well, at the time of Tonkin, Fulbright was one of the most fervent advocates of the Tonkin Gulf resolution.

He steered it to passage, although as he says now, he never anticipated that it would become the functional equivalent of a declaration of war. At the time I don't think many people in the Administration did either. This is part of a larger question that has concerned me. It has to do with the element of incremental policy-making, a kind of inexorability intrinsic to the whole process of the United States involvement in Vietnam from 1947 forward. With but rare exceptions we always seemed to be calculating the short-term consequences of each alternative at every step of the process, but not the long-term consequences. And with each succeeding short-range consequence we

became more deeply a prisoner of the process.

At what point does a President say: "I don't think we want to accept the consequence of the steady accumulation of antecedent decisions made over a long period of time. The process is hereby reversed"? It's true that the commitment of the United States to the defense of South Vietnam is not something Lyndon Johnson made up out of whole cloth — that his choices, however unseen by past policy-makers, were progressively narrowed, and were going to have to be faced up to by some Administration at some time as a consequence of previous incremental acts. And the process goes back a long time, all the way to the end of World War II. Read those articles William Bullitt wrote in *Life* magazine extolling Bao Dai, whom he had met during the war, and you will learn something of how the establishment had begun to think even then about Indochina and how the arguments were made that we should support the French against the rising power of Ho Chi Minh. By 1950 we were willing to back their opposition to the Vietminh with more than two billion dollars, raising our stake as we did.

Every President from Truman on accentuated in one way or the other our interest in a non-Communist pro-Western regime out there. Over a decade — and it was the decade of the cold war, unfortunately, which tended to distort our ability to discriminate about seemingly related but actually quite independent developments in different parts of the world — over a decade public opinion came to accept the necessity, or at least the inevitability, of a very large American interest in Southeast Asia. In his own way and under his own set of circumstances each President confirmed and enlarged that interest. Now, would each have acted as President Johnson finally acted in 1964 and 1965 if he had been faced with those circumstances? I don't know. But in the same breath I have to admit that over the years, in small but steady increments, decisions were made and policies were formulated which were eventually almost certain to present some President with the ultimate decision of whether to protect that interest by direct intervention or to cut that interest to smaller proportions and live with the consequences.

I do not for a minute exonerate the President and those of us who served with him from the decisions that were made to go in. But I cannot ignore the fact that over two decades there was a chain of inexorable momentum which, with little significant national debate, carried our interest from one level to another until the decision one day became: Do we go in? Certainly he might have said: "No, we will not go in." That was an option. No one knows what the consequences might have been; one can only assume they might not have been

as costly or as bloody or as tragically divisive as the war was to become. Of course, we'll never know what might have been. I suppose it is academic to deal in such retrospection now. But a lot of people have dealt in hindsight, and hindsight is the mother of righteousness about the fallibility of other men's judgments.

Tradition, precedent, or whatever, has not always had such a binding influence on Johnson. I'd be much more inclined to go along with something you said earlier — I could see him reacting to the idea of there being a stake, and a stake being something you don't give up without there being a reason or gain for giving it up. What Presidents before Johnson decided about education policy — that an aid-to-education bill couldn't be passed because the Catholic Church said so — was not what determined what Johnson did about education policy. The same with civil rights when he was Majority Leader. He figured out his own policy, in spite of precedent, and broke stalemates. Maybe he responds best to stalemates.

There's the element of irony in our dilemma. I think that it helps to explain the melancholy frustration which gripped the nation during the past winter and led to the President's recent shift of policy. Here we were fighting a land war on the mainland of Asia against the best judgment of some of the best military figures of the last two decades and against the political instincts of the President himself. Did he believe it would come to this? I don't think so. He had an infectious belief right up to the last minute that some way could be found to devise a political course around a wider war.

One incident I remember well. In the summer of '64 stories appeared in several prominent newspapers, obviously based on backgrounding by some person or persons in the Administration, implying that the Administration was certain to adopt retaliatory and punitive measures against North Vietnam unless infiltration into the South stopped. The President was furious, not because the stories were leaks of formulated policy but because he didn't believe we would have to get to that kind of policy. He plowed the bureaucracy until he thought he had uncovered the culprit, and in a telephone call half across the country to where the fellow was vacationing, he gave him hell. "If you want to plan a war," the President told him, "you make it clear it's your war you're planning. And you go and fight it, because I don't want to fight it for you."

Well, if you heard him then, you had to believe him. You had to think that he felt circumstances could be changed and that somehow he could change them. For some time that had been the



general view in Washington — the assessments of men close to the developments out there, who kept coming back from Vietnam saying, "Things are getting better; things will get better." Go back and review the assessments of '62 and '63, the whirlwind trips of one adviser after another, the McNamara report released by the White House in October, 1963, saying that the major part of the U.S. military task could be completed by the end of 1965. Those were at least the public expectations in the last months of the Kennedy presidency. The whole atmosphere inherited by Lyndon Johnson and carried through 1964 was infected with, well, if not optimism, at least hope, and faith in the slide-rule concept of guerrilla war.

Is there a relation between the discouragement of liberals with the Administration's interventionist foreign policy, and calls for decentralization of government at home? It's interesting that Lippmann makes an appeal in foreign affairs parallel with the appeal Pat Moynihan is making in domestic affairs. Does it add up to a new conservative consensus?

Well, Bill Buckley was talking about decentralization before Pat Moynihan and Dick Goodwin, with different emphasis, of course. I hope that Goodwin and Moynihan have not permitted their disillusionment with the performance of the federal government as a result of the war in Vietnam to lead them to endow local units of government with virtues the latter possess only in the mythology of people like Barry Goldwater. You can carry decentralization too far. Goodwin says that decentralization is not

abdication, and he is right; and he says it is possible to set standards for local action and to raise the level of performance by enforcing these standards. One concrete example he uses is the President's Committee on Physical Fitness that drew up model programs which have been followed quite successfully across the country.

Well, that is fine, but standards for physical fitness are one thing, and standards for integrating schools or bringing the poor into the power structure are another. Goodwin says that the physical fitness program worked even though it had no regulatory power and hardly any money; I maintain that this is the reason it did work — it involved no transfer of real power either financially or politically. I'm for getting down to the lowest common denominators of authority, but we have to realize that getting there is going to be hard, and that we will not find a band of angels waiting when we arrive. A lot of people are going to have to be kicked in their political shins to make decentralization work. And the federal government is going to be more crucial, not less, as the implications of decentralization emerge.

How so?

The kind of localism a pluralistic society needs requires a strong center. There can't be a vacuum in the center without a loss of direction as you move away from the center. The federal government has to be more than a kind of central bank for local entrepreneurs. You have to have cohesion from the center. This means a strong Executive and a reasonably coherent legislative process. I mean, you can't elect Presidents who say as Governor Reagan in effect has been saying: "I am your governor; I don't believe in government."

Part of what motivates Moynihan seems to be a discouragement about the programs he was involved in and the efforts he was involved in, I guess particularly in civil rights.

All of us who had any role in the development of the programs of the last eight years are discouraged because their potential hasn't been realized. But I am not willing to say, as are some of my former colleagues, that these efforts failed because of inherent weaknesses, or because they were poorly administered. No, I think they failed because they have not been given resources adequate for the purpose intended.

Take the antipoverty program. It's having problems all over the country. But who knows what it might have accomplished if the President's personal leadership had not been siphoned off by the war, or if we had been able to give it the money we were talking about back in 1964? In Nassau County, where I live, the antipoverty program this

year is getting less than 50 percent of the funds it received last year for summer projects.

Every ghetto in the county is littered with shattered expectations. How will we ever know what the war on poverty might have done if it had been a war and not a skirmish? Until we deal with that question, let's not rush off saying the federal government is finished, or that decentralization is the road to Zion. Actually, the war on poverty was an effort to prove that Washington and local communities can work together with maximum local control — a concept at the heart of most of the Great Society legislation — and if it isn't working, I believe the reason lies not with the concept but with our failure to nourish it from infancy to maturity.

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Are there things we know now about federal and state power that will be of help when we go back to those problems with the same energy that we had in 1963 and 1964? What about the feeling that some programs went too fast, and that Johnson was too confident that he could always handle a Dick Daley, and that this would take care of any problem in Chicago? What did we learn, and what didn't we?

For one thing, we have learned that the power structure still rejects alien bodies. The paranoid reaction of state and local politicians to the community-action program caused adjustments and accommodations in the program which all but murdered the concept of participation by the poor.

Do you feel that it's primarily racial, and that the machines simply reflected white middle-class fears?

What these people feared was the passing of power to others, black and white. The poor in our cities, for example — they have been the wards of the political machines. The machines needed them to exist, and they needed the machines to survive, and the benevolence of the politicians toward the poor kept the arrangement going. But when the poor began to go beyond benevolence, when the poor began to want power — well, that was something else again. It wasn't a question of black and white as much as it was of in and out.

Suddenly we discovered that these people wanted more than merely the illusion of being in, they wanted political power, a sense of control. They were no longer contented with the meager paternalism by which the system had been held together, and with the imagery of justice it had fashioned. They were fed up with Mr. Big's definition of what was good for them. They wanted — and many white leaders in the cities haven't learned this yet — they wanted to have a voice in defining what was just and what was good — and

what was their due. The machinery of politics just didn't know how to accommodate people who thought like that. That was true in Southern politics and in the wards of Northern cities.

Is federal power easier to yield at the economic level than it is at the social level?

I think we have learned that, yes. In social reform you are dealing with power in its most personal form, the power of one man or one group to withhold power from another man or another group, and by withholding power to withhold recognition and rank and responsibility. Men will share their money sooner than they will share their political power.

Did the question of the role of the poor and the possibility of breaking up traditional forms of political power interest the President? Or did that fight come after the war got so big that he was preoccupied with the latter? Also, in New Deal days, when it came to a fight between what a planner like Rex Tugwell wanted and what Frank Hague wanted in Jersey City, Roosevelt usually decided in favor of the bosses. When it came to such a confrontation, say in Chicago, would Johnson have risked his relationship with Mayor Daley for the sake of the community-action program?

There was a time when the President sought to persuade the city politicians that the war on poverty was less a threat to their established order than the failure to deal with poverty would be. Yes, he did want to open their eyes. But of course, at that time, in '64 and '65, I don't think any of us realized just how radically the political system needed to be altered to accomplish our goals.

The first reaction to the community-action program made us aware. I remember one local politician calling up the White House in alarm to say: "It's all right for you fellows to *talk* about a revolution, but can't you just stop there? I'm going to be revolutionized right out of office." There were several like the governor who made it clear that the poverty program would be welcome only if he controlled just how far it would go. Of course, that was true elsewhere, in Harlem as well as in the state capital of Texas. Adam Clayton Powell and John Connally reacted the same way; they knew change to be inevitable, but they wanted it on their own terms. Before long Sargent Shriver was hearing from the established powers in every political fiefdom in the country, men who welcomed the idea of a war on poverty until they realized it meant more than transferring money from Washington to the state capital. It meant transferring power within their communities at the risk of their own control.

Would it have made a difference if the President had started fresh? How much difference did it make that he came in the way he did, having to prove so many things to so many people, feeling so many compulsions on him? Can you put your finger on any sense that he was too pursued at times by these fears of what the press thought and what he had to prove to the Kennedys and to the *ancien régime*, to the people who'd laughed at him all his life?

Would it have made a difference? I don't know. In one sense, the President was a free man — he owed his accession to fate rather than to any single constituency to which he was primarily indebted. In another sense, he was constrained: inhibited by the growing legend of Camelot, by an approaching campaign, by his fear that no man from the South could be a national leader, by his uncertainty toward some of the people around him whom he had inherited but whom he did not feel he could jettison, by the whole situation into which he was thrust. The 1964 election changed all that, in my judgment, and was the time to change personnel and policies, just as we changed priorities.

Priorities?

Yes, for a while after the election — through 1966 — we became a government principally devoted to domestic reform. The President was drawn in that direction just as naturally by his Populist origins as John Kennedy had been drawn by his experiences to the Grand Design.



There's begun to be a revisionist effort — it's early to be having it — to prove that as early as January, '64, there was a major change in Vietnam policy, and that the men who'd been beaten down in the councils while Kennedy was alive, especially Walt Rostow and Vice President Johnson, finally were free to put into effect a more hawkish policy on the war than had been in effect from '61 to '63.

I think these people overlook some very pertinent facts. The basic decisions about bombing and troops were made in 1965. Walt Rostow at that time, for example, was still State Department counselor with very infrequent, if any, access to the President. Rostow's views on the war were known because he had made speeches about guerrilla warfare and all that, and because of the Taylor-Rostow mission to Vietnam in 1961, so it was easy for some people to assume that his must have been the decisive influence since he had been the most articulate and conspicuous theorist. But the men who advised President Johnson on the bombing program which began in February, 1965, and who were the principal parties to the decision to

intervene with large numbers of troops, were the men who had been working directly on Vietnam for three years.

Well, that relates to what I was asking about the inhibition of acting freely.

I don't want to imply that Lyndon Johnson was the puppet of these men, or that he couldn't have listened to other men, or that his views were different from theirs. The point is that the President was working with the advisers he had inherited. At any one of a number of points he might have said, "I'm not going to go this way," and he might have reversed or at least arrested the process. But his advice came from men who had been long involved in Vietnam policy — that's the particular historical point to remember. And they were basically united in their advice.

Was there a visible change to your eye from the early hope of '64 and '65 that the war could be handled if only power were used in a shrewd and effective and quiet way? When did the feeling emerge that we were into something that we couldn't get out of and that hadn't brought the results we'd hoped for?

I think by early 1966. After the failure of the peace offensive — the thirty-seven-day bombing pause, the expeditions overseas, the private messages to Hanoi — after all that came to no good end, I believed the President began to expect the worst. More and more he would talk about a long war with no end in sight. He kept pushing for action on domestic legislation because he realized that time would run out as the costs of the war rose. Mike Mansfield made a speech about then urging the Administration to "consolidate" rather than send up another big program when Congress returned in January of 1966, and the President said to some of us: "Consolidation is another word for quitting. We can't quit now. This may be the last chance we have to get some of these things done."

As I look back, I think the President knew then that the war was headed for proportions that he had hoped to prevent. He was increasingly disillusioned over the failure of the Soviets to influence Hanoi. The President — well, most of us shared this at the White House — we felt that he could reason with the Russians and they would deliver. We overestimated their influence in Hanoi or their willingness to help us off a painful hook.

What about all the talk about Munich? Are such things taken seriously in Washington in other than a rhetorical and debating sense? Do they talk about Munich; does Munich have the reality, in fact, that it seems to have in the speeches?

I think it started out as a slang version of the domino theory. And you have to remember that a lot of important people in Washington believed in the domino theory. Arthur Schlesinger in his book about Kennedy claims that whether or not the domino theory had validity in 1954, it had acquired meaning by 1961, and that the Kennedy Administration was forced to deal with the domino theory as a fact instead of just a theory. Well, this was and is a widely held assumption in some parts of Washington. I think it is a mistake to claim that you have to deal with a theory as a fact when you know it is a theory; that is making sacrifice before the altar of your own rhetoric and accepting as binding the oblations of your predecessors. The foreign policy of this country has been the property of a certain exclusive school for so long that it has acquired its own religion with its own priesthood, canons, and rites.

The best thing that could happen to this country's foreign policy would be for the next President to appoint to the State Department a team of men beholden to no orthodox liturgy — to no liturgy, period — of foreign policy. What a horrible thing to do to the custodial bureaucracy — to have newcomers running our foreign policy — but I think the establishment would survive. Certainly the country would. It would do our foreign policy good to have a new beginning free of yesterday's cant. But that would require some men from other than traditional molds.

Did the President ever try to talk to men from outside the structure?

He chewed over problems a great deal and —

Alone? Happier with two people?

It varied. He is generally more satisfied with small groups of people he knows well. As Kennedy before him, he learned that the National Security Council is not a live institution, not suited to precise debate for the sake of decision. President Johnson chooses to call in a handful of top advisers, confidants, close friends.

Could others talk?

Oh, yes. You had to be able to back up your statements with evidence. The President is a great "therefore" man. You may make a long expository statement about a subject and be impressed with your eloquence, only to have him ask: "Therefore?" With staff assistants in particular, he was always more interested in your information than in your opinions, but if you could show that your opinions were built on facts, he was willing to listen.

Take civil rights. Did the President discuss strategy and tactics with others?

Yes. But on this one he seemed sure of his own instincts, especially on the timing of his own actions. The address to the joint session of Congress in 1965, for instance. Some people argued that the emotional climate of the country was too tense. He felt the moment was propitious for folding the political, legal, and moral dimensions of the issue into one major assault on the country's conscience. It was quite an hour — the President standing there, speaking in that slow drawl, "We Shall Overcome."

The press says that the President can't seem to bring the public into what goes on.

With a roomful of men he is a masterful persuader. His most consistent problem, on the other hand, has been the failure to bring the public at large along with his Vietnam policies. He could bring two adversaries together to see his point of view, his perspective, but for some reason, he never convinced the public of the reasons for our Vietnam policy. There is a difference between the process of arriving at a decision and the process of explaining the decision in a way that involves the country.

He was close to power from the start. Isn't it fair to say that even when he was a 100 percent red-hot New Dealer, he was never really a reformer because he was so close to power, and felt it was always working for the things he wanted it to work for? He felt no need to reform the power structure because he believed so much in what it was doing.

To him, power was the way to reform, rather than the other way around. He used his power as a young congressman, power that came from his access to the White House, to change the economic contours of central Texas, his district. In the Senate, he swung a little to the right on occasions, as he moved from representing a liberal district to representing a conservative state, but generally he has believed in using federal power to bring the benefits of the system to outsiders.

Does his resentful tone against critics and dissenters mean in part that he objects to being attacked by the people who have been arguing for the use of federal power for the last forty years, as if he were saying: "Now that we're doing it you're objecting."

Part of that resentment is the frustration he feels over his failure to persuade those critics to his viewpoint. And, too, he thinks the people who have been against him in Vietnam were for Truman in Korea. What he is doing now he sees as consistent with what Truman did then, and he can't understand why the liberals deserted him. I don't think official Washington realized how the climate has changed. Until recently, that is. We were

closer to World War II in 1950 and the martial spirit was more easily awakened. People — liberals as well as reactionaries — were more moralistic about Communism; they saw what the Soviets had done in Eastern Europe, and Stalin, of course, was a caricature of the worst attributes of Communism — Ho Chi Minh just doesn't seem that menacing to most people.

Then there's the generational aspect of how people feel about war as an acceptable instrument of national policy. The parents of today's young had just fought a war in which the great values of Western civilization were at stake, and young people in the early fifties were not so inclined to question the necessity or the efficacy of war. That's all changed now. Young people born after Korea, born just about the time Lyndon Johnson was moving to power in the Senate, reject a view of the national interest that prevailed in his generation. They're not pacifists; they're certainly not cowards. They just don't believe war settles anything. They don't believe you can preserve civilization by acting in an uncivilized manner — and war they regard as uncivilized. And the difference is that this generation has attained a political maturity, and a political power, that few men in office appreciated until recently.

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Seven years after helping to start the Peace Corps, what do you think such an effort means in two senses: both in terms of bringing young people, especially those who are alienated and feel powerless, into contact with power, and in terms of what this country can do abroad?

The Peace Corps is still the answer I give when asked, as I am on every college campus, "What can I do?" The Peace Corps and VISTA and the Teachers' Corps — all of those are programs which rely on a person's volition and initiative and his desire to make some difference. The spirit of the volunteer is very much alive in this country; it just hasn't been making the front page. I would like to see these programs — Peace Corps, VISTA, the Teachers' Corps — combined into one program through which a variety of experiences would be made available to the volunteer. Perhaps one year working in a ghetto and then two years abroad — or one year abroad and two years in a ghetto or in the mountains of Appalachia. The people who want to drop out are a minority. For most young people the key word is engagement; they have a deep thirst for commitment. We have to make sure that the demands of commitment are greater than the talents of the committed. Young people ask, What value is there in pursuing some goal that doesn't truly stretch your intelligence, your moral fiber, all your talents? This is why the Peace

Corps experience is still valid today — you go out to conquer and come home humbled. You turn on everything you possess and you still can't save the world. Then you realize that perhaps it wasn't the world but you that needed saving. In terms of your second question, of what this country can do abroad, I think the same lesson is applicable. It may be that the accumulated experience of the Peace Corps will help us be more realistic about ourselves and our role in the world.

What has changed in this regard since 1960?

Look at the historical context. In the era starting about a decade ago one generation leapfrogged another. In the Soviet Union Khrushchev succeeded Stalin; in the Catholic Church John succeeded Pius; in the United States Kennedy succeeded Eisenhower. Whatever else you can say about them, they were unorthodox men. And they set out to make some radical changes in the very systems that had produced them. They were curious about the world, they were innovative, they were — well, irreverent about the dogma of the past. They were rational men, too — Khrushchev more so after the missile crisis than before. In terms of appeal they leapfrogged a political generation: Kennedy over the generation of the Symingtons and the Johnsons; John over the generation of the Spellmans; Khrushchev over the generation of the Bulganins. They appealed to the young generation. There was a heightened sense of anticipation that the institutions of the past, especially the divisions of the cold war and the doctrinaire obstacles between the great faiths, were giving way to new forces. The young in particular began to see the world as a more pliant place which they could personally help to mold.

Then, in a short span of time, Pope John was dead, Kennedy was assassinated, Khrushchev was deposed. And the generation that had been bypassed was suddenly restored to power, and men who struck young people as essentially managers of the system rather than spurs to the system were in the ascendancy again: in this country, Lyndon Johnson; in the Soviet Union, Brezhnev and Kosygin; in the Catholic Church, Pope Paul. These are men of large talents, and they are misunderstood men by this generation, but the point is — to the young they appear to be more traditional in style, in the way they lead, even in their preference for prudence.

Any great revolutionary era usually has to be followed by an institutionalized, managerial phase.

That's true, and in their own way these men have sought reform. But we're talking about power

and the symbols of leadership and the young. And the fact is that a young and articulate generation came of age without being able to identify easily with the men in power.

There's something so sad about trying to silence the critics and the young by stating categorically that Vietnam is the same as Korea. Instead of being persuasive for the young, it has exactly the opposite effect: it provokes.

The last idol this generation worships is history. In a way this is unfortunate, because some sense of continuity is important to understanding one's times and one's own life.

And history being given to them as a form of discipline.

As if it were the Eleventh Commandment: Thou shalt obey history.

What you're saying is that five or seven years ago they thought they had a chance to make some history instead.

Yes, and they still want to make some history today. But in a way consonant with their values. They look at the history of their elders. It hasn't removed poverty. It hasn't ended war. It hasn't dealt justly with the black man. It hasn't made the cities livable. So they say: "Give us a chance to do better. And don't try to make us do it by your rules." We can't be too disappointed, or intolerant, if they write their own textbook for a change.

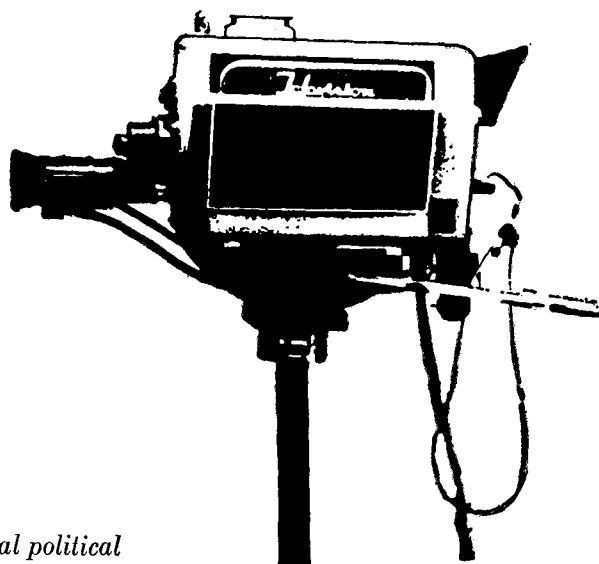
I'd like to ask you why you believe the President decided to withdraw. Did he see the handwriting on the wall, or was there a higher motive?

I think the answer that makes sense is the most obvious answer of all. The unity he sought for the country is imperiled, and he knows it. He recognizes that he personally had become the center of the controversy. I think he realized that his withdrawal was the only way to tame people's emotions about the war and to put the debate on a more rational plane. It was also the only way to convince the people in Hanoi that his offer to negotiate was something more than a ploy by a politically ambitious President. He relishes the presidency, but he also respects it. I heard him say once: "The people of this country did not elect me to this office to preside over its erosion, and I intend to turn this office with all its power intact to the next man who sits in this chair." I think he felt the only way he could fulfill that pledge was to refuse to involve the office in what was surely going to be a bitter and furious campaign.

CARNIVAL OF EXCESS

TV at the Conventions

by Charles McDowell, Jr.



Just what will the television networks be covering at the national political conventions next month? "The public version of private arrangements," argues Charles McDowell, and reality or illusion, may the best gab win. Washington correspondent for the Richmond, Virginia, TIMES-DISPATCH, Mr. McDowell has been covering national conventions since 1952.

AS WE prepare to face up to the national political conventions of 1968, let us go back to a moment in 1964 when David Brinkley looked down on the Republican convention and said in that way that David Brinkley says things, "Nothing succeeds like excess."

He was talking about some madness of the moment, some gassy, extravagant, and irrelevant exercise by the assembly in the Cow Palace at San Francisco. His aphorism could have been applied as well to the whole institution of presidential nominating conventions. The institution is an American invention of the mid-nineteenth century and nobody has had the nerve to copy it; but to the wonderment of the rest of the civilized world, this carnival of excess remains a vital part of a successful political system.

Brinkley also could have been talking about the television enterprise in which he was participating. The acknowledged wry-comment champion of television news was defending his title in a glass aerie that cost the National Broadcasting Company about \$100,000 to build, use for four days, and tear down. The network was spending nearly \$3 million to cover the convention (whose outcome was foregone) with 60 tons of electronic equipment and a staff of more than 500 people. The staff included such specialists as 26 directors and associate directors; 173 cameramen and engineers; 4 famous transistorized correspondents explaining

and creating confusion among the delegates on the floor; a bearer assigned to haul food and drink to Brinkley and Chet Huntley in their booth under the rafters; and a flack assigned to monitor, collect, and publish for the greater glory of NBC each day's wry comments under the title of "Brinklies."

That convention was won, as almost everyone on Madison Avenue recalls, by the Huntley-Brinkley ticket. NBC swept the ratings from the first gavel to the last, routing the Columbia Broadcasting System and leaving the American Broadcasting Company far behind with hardly a respectable favorite-son vote. The outcome of the Democratic convention was the same.

NBC won not because the other networks failed to compete vigorously. All three competed so vigorously, and seemed to become such a prominent part of the proceedings, that a mighty flap about intrusive, obtrusive coverage ensued. Its reverberations continue on the eve of the 1968 conventions. There is growing concern that television is subverting the character and injuring the function of a grand old American institution.

After the 1964 conventions Walter Cronkite of CBS made a speech in which he came right out and said, "I heartily believe that in 1968 the political parties ought to ban television from the floor of the convention hall." He was for televising the convention, of course, but he thought tele-

vision's aggressive and gadgety presence on the floor itself "makes a mockery of the fact that this is a convention of delegates who are supposed to be listening to the speeches and tending to some sort of business."

This was heresy to a large segment of the television news fraternity, but Jack Gould, the influential television critic of the *New York Times*, rushed to Cronkite's support, writing: "For any viewer who survived the long summer nights of TV's competitive frenzy and the cathode calisthenics on the convention floor, Mr. Cronkite's stature has achieved heroic proportions."

Some weeks later, no less an advocate than General Dwight D. Eisenhower carried the case to the Republican National Committee. In the best tradition of Eisenhower-off-the-cuff indignation, the former President said a political convention on television "is a picture of confusion, of noise, of impossible deportment, of indifference . . . and in short a thing that if it happened in a business trustee meeting or even the annual meeting of one of your corporations, you would be horrified." He blamed television and the press, along with inept sergeants at arms, supernumeraries, and "spurious" demonstrators, for the spectacle that offended him. "I think the convention floor should be inviolable. Only people on it should be delegates. I say all press, all publicity media, should be excluded from the floor. They have places. We want them, but certainly we don't want them running around and having interviews when they are interfering with someone who is trying to make a serious point before the convention."

The Republicans cheered and appointed a Committee on Convention Reform. From their initial zeal one could have concluded that the Republicans were going to turn the next party convention into a sort of Chamber of Commerce meeting with violin music in the background.

The Democrats did not get very excited about reform; they have always been much more relaxed than the Republicans about television and the press and confusion generally. While the Republicans were drafting pages of suggested restrictions, most of which would be greatly softened, especially where television was concerned, by convention time, little was heard from the Democrats except a casual remark by National Chairman John Bailey that he hoped to "do something about that damned camera stand." He meant the one at the front of the hall blocking a good many of the delegates' and alternates' view of the podium at the last couple of conventions.

It should be said that many of the most respected men in television news have rejected the contention that their medium should concentrate on decorous coverage of the podium and program of the con-

ventions. Brinkley, for example, has said, "Television's job at a convention is journalism, to cover the news, whether it is on the rostrum, on the convention floor, in a back corridor, or in a downtown hotel. Our job is not to serve as . . . a coast-to-coast loudspeaker system for politicians to use as they see fit. I disagree completely [with the Cronkite proposition], and I think it is one of the worst ideas I ever heard of."

Howard K. Smith of ABC said, "Many things are wrong with political conventions, but they were wrong long before television. Speeches and demonstrations that once lasted for hours now take only minutes. Thanks to television, and its floor correspondents, the viewer is generally better, and sooner, informed than is the spectator in the convention hall. When there is confusion, frequently it is the television or radio newsman on the floor who first provides the needed clarification."

Television needs a show with enough color, drama, and tension to hold an audience for the sponsors. Within that framework, news executives want to cover the news. At a national convention precious little news is made on the rostrum, nor is there much color, drama, or tension in a windy address by the lieutenant governor of somewhere who wants to get some prime-time exposure and then go home and run for the Senate.

Bill Leonard, vice president of CBS News, said recently while brooding over his network's plans for 1968 convention coverage, "You can't just point the camera at the convention. Hell, nobody would watch after a while. Even the delegates don't pay any attention to most of what goes on. They have to be chained to their seats. We have to try to report what's really going on. Often, the way a correspondent has to do that is to look into the camera and tell you with his mouth. Or, if I've got my choice between the national committeewoman of Wyoming welcoming some guest to the platform, and an interview on the floor with the chairman of a crucial delegation that has just caucused, I'm going to the floor." Leonard does not contend, nor do other network news people, that television coverage of conventions approaches the ideal. "I'm not ashamed to say that we overcover them," he said. "When we turn our attention to something, we are so big we make it big. When we overplay something, it can be serious. And I must say we sometimes hit a gnat with a baseball bat."

UNDETERRED by dreamy talk of reform, NBC and CBS are coming back this year with the most expensive, extensive, and aggressively competitive coverage of the conventions in history. ABC, as a matter of fiscal necessity rather than journalistic

judgment, is withdrawing from the big battle of live coverage. It will experiment instead with a nightly convention summary from 9:30 to 11 P.M. emphasizing analysis, background, and videotaped highlights. For untold millions of viewers, ABC's early-evening entertainment shows, mostly reruns of popular situation comedies, will provide a long-awaited alternative to the conventions. As "lead-in" programming, the entertainment shows could deliver a huge audience to ABC's convention summary. If ABC does bring off a coup in the ratings, 1968 could be a major turning point for the philosophy, technique, and economics of convention coverage.

NBC and CBS each will spend up to \$5 million covering each convention, and neither can count on getting back more than about a third of its expenses in sponsors' fees. ABC's convention coverage will be much cheaper; not only that, but ABC will be making money on sponsored entertainment, and its affiliates will be taking advantage of more opportunities to sell lucrative local spot commercials, while the other networks are losing money on public service. NBC, cushioned by its parent corporation, RCA, implies with perhaps pardonable smugness that it will be giving blanket live coverage to national conventions as long as there are national conventions. But CBS confesses that it has been discussing what it calls "selective coverage" for years. That is, the network would stay with the conventions when they were lively but cut away to some sort of standby entertainment show when things got dull. Richard S. Salant, president of CBS News, has said that covering conventions from start to finish has led to massive reporting of trivia. He asked, "Are we really exercising our news judgment when we stay on that long — while the boy orators orate; while the favorite sons, who everybody knows will withdraw, are nominated and seconded?"

Still, CBS wound up planning full-scale coverage this year. If the conventions, which promised to be exciting at planning time, should turn out to be cut and dried, there would remain the exciting competition with NBC to keep things interesting. The industry's audience analysts estimate that the country has 56 million "television households"; on the basis of past experience, when ABC was not offering its early-evening alternative, well over 100 million people in 52 million of those households could be expected to watch at least part of the conventions. The average viewing time in the past has been about fifteen hours for the two conventions. About 23 million households will have color sets by August, and these will be the first conventions broadcast in color. That means that, along with additional expense and various technical problems, much hotter lights will be needed than before,

which means in turn that the Miami Beach Convention Hall and the Chicago Amphitheater have had to look to their air conditioning lest the poor delegates be addled by heat before they nominate. As for the glare, dark glasses are recommended.

The network staffs will be ready in Miami Beach a week before the Republicans convene on August 5 and in Chicago a week ahead of the Democrats' opening on August 26. After covering the preliminary committee meetings and political maneuvering on an irregular schedule, NBC and CBS will begin constant live coverage during the formal convention sessions, which will be held almost entirely in the evenings to accommodate the viewers at home.

NBC plans to go all the way with its Huntley-Brinkley ticket, undefeated since its first great victories at both 1960 conventions. Below the anchor booth, floor men and candidate-trackers will include such correspondents as Sander Vanocur, Frank McGee, John Chancellor, Edwin Newman, Douglas Kiker, and Jack Perkins. Like a good many of their colleagues on the other networks these days, most of those men would be top-flight journalists in any medium. No longer do realistic pad-and-pencil reporters have the luxury of scoffing at television correspondents as superficialists with deep voices and nice smiles. Yet I have not forgotten watching Robert ("Shad") Northshield, a top NBC News executive, sending Vanocur, McGee, and Chancellor onto the floor of the Cow Palace at the start of the Goldwater convention. As they threw their legs over the railing and went out there like a fresh hockey line, the amiably flamboyant Coach Northshield intoned, "I have the feeling this is the lull before the lull. But if it gets deadly, we are prepared to make our own show."

Later, as everyone knows, Chancellor was arrested for refusing to be cleared from the floor. After interviewing his captors, he was bodily removed, signing off for posterity, "This is John Chancellor, somewhere in custody."

The incident was an extreme example of the kind of electronic journalism that provokes the charge that television does not so much cover a convention as it covers itself covering a convention. The industry contends that self-coverage is inherent in a "live" medium that must interview and explain if it is to do its job right. Advanced thinkers apparently find comfort in extending the philosophy of Marshall McLuhan to redefine the whole situation: the medium *is* the convention.

THE competitive stakes are high. Convention coverage is an investment in prestige for the network news departments. Experience has demon-

strated that ratings, critical notices, and public reactions during the convention broadcasts carry over to affect a network's public-affairs image and audience for months and even years. So for this year, CBS will be ready to match NBC dollar for dollar, gadget for gadget, and man for man (with a bit of tactical double-teaming where that seems judicious). When NBC asked the Republican arrangements committee to approve a center camera stand 25 feet in front of the rostrum and "a foot or two above the level of the speaker's nose," CBS seconded the motion. When CBS told the committee that its legions at the convention would require 750 single hotel rooms, 20 suites, 30,000 square feet of working space just off the convention floor, and 700 passes to the convention hall, the NBC request was substantially the same. NBC did make a mysterious request for dock space for two yachts in front of the Fontainebleau Hotel at Miami Beach, and that caught CBS unaware, but otherwise the contest looks equal logistically.

NBC has four "ultra-portable mini-cameras" for use in close support of its floor men. To match the competition camera for camera, CBS has its own new color portables for the infighting. The negotiations about these roving cameras on the floor may provide a measure of the Republicans' success in trying to reform journalistic enterprise at their convention. The networks each wanted to use four roving cameras; the most ardent Republican reformers preferred none. At last report, the compromise was three.

CBS will "anchor" its convention coverage with Walter Cronkite. He will be on camera alone in his glass booth next door to Huntley-Brinkley. But the CBS strategists have come up with a new ploy to support Cronkite: Eric Sevareid and Roger Mudd will work in a studio adjacent to the convention floor, and CBS viewers will be seeing a lot of them. The network also will have Harry Reasoner reporting from a seat on the rostrum; the floor men, headed by Mike Wallace; a spirited crew of young correspondents scattered around the convention city; and Art Buchwald, the humorist, and Theodore H. White, the historian, on call for spot duty. In the main confrontation, however, it is apparent that CBS means to counter Huntley-Brinkley with a threesome, Cronkite-Sevareid-Mudd. The team does not sound catchy, heaven knows, but it is interesting. Bill Leonard gave the executive view of the new team's responsibilities: "Walter will tell us what's happening. Eric will concentrate on the meaning of what's happening. Roger will discuss the political background, the personalities. Roger is irreverent and unawed, you know — a tough reporter without being awed — you know what I mean? He laughs well."

What all that seems to mean is that CBS is going

after the opposition's star, Brinkley, by double-teaming him. Leonard declined to go into the delicate details, but CBS clearly assumes that Cronkite will be able to handle Chet Huntley head to head while the literate, incisive Sevareid and the irreverent Mudd swarm all over Brinkley. If this sounds like basketball-coach talk before the big game, that is how it is. But make no mistake, the CBS strategists are deadly serious about their game plan.

IN THE brief and fervid history of television competition at the conventions, the last two rounds have been traumatic for CBS. Before those ratings debacles of 1960 and 1964, CBS and Cronkite had done well competitively in 1952 and 1956. Television was so new to most people in 1952 and the conventions themselves were so fascinating that year that hardly anybody was aware of anchor men or slick production. At the 1956 conventions, NBC put Huntley and Brinkley together as a team, but they were not a sensation. Nobody dreamed they would become the most famous hyphenation in all of television. Their nightly news program began to catch on during the following years, however, while Cronkite worked on special events and somebody else read the evening news on CBS. Then came the 1960 conventions. Huntley and Brinkley, cool and understated, carefully insulated by their producer, Reuven Frank, from the howling chaos that prevails in television control rooms at these affairs, were indeed a sensation. Frank, now executive vice president, and William R. McAndrew, then vice president and now president of NBC News, imposed a remarkable amount of order on the electronic tangle of their convention operations. CBS, in 1968, is just now reorganizing its communications, control, and production planning to catch up to the convention techniques of NBC.

As it happened, I visited the rival television headquarters at the 1960 Republican convention in Chicago after NBC had scored its tremendous victory in the ratings and with the critics at the Democrats' conclave in Los Angeles. A Chicago newspaper actually gave front-page play to a story of the "panic" at CBS. At CBS I found what looked like panic to me, too, but a publicity man burred, "What is all this talk of panic? We are not panicked. Let's get out of this confusion where we can talk." In the sanctuary of an empty first-aid room — nobody at CBS was physically wounded, anyway — the publicity man said, "Look, we are not competing for ratings. We are trying to do a job of electronic journalism, cover the news. We are not about to try to match Huntley and Brinkley

with a couple of jokers. Our approach is like the *New York Times*, theirs is like the *New Yorker*. OK? Now, I'm not going to run down Huntley and Brinkley as newsmen, but I heard a guy say they reminded him of Weber and Fields. I heard another guy say he would like to book them into a nightclub when this is over."

This confirmed the CBS panic. By 1964, CBS had long since put Cronkite on the evening news, shaken up its executives, established an "elections unit" to worry about political events, and scored some dramatic breakthroughs in early vote estimates on election nights. Hopes were high at CBS as the Republican convention began. As it came out, CBS got good critical notices, but NBC got a big win in the ratings, 2 to 1 in some of the "major markets." There was another panic: for the Democratic convention Cronkite was benched ignominiously, and into the CBS anchor booth went Roger Mudd and the courtly veteran of radio, Robert Trout. They had their moments, but not enough people watched. NBC won big again.

The industry assumes that CBS, even after all its past troubles, will be a strong challenger to the Huntley-Brinkley network this year. Not only has CBS improved its lineup and supporting organization, but it has been more resourceful than NBC in covering many of the preconvention political developments. Cronkite's regular news show has moved up steadily in the ratings to a position just ahead of or just behind Huntley-Brinkley, depending on varying or obscurantist interpretations of the figures.

The third network, ABC, has never figured prominently in the news competition, although the president of ABC News, Elmer Lower, appears to be accorded special respect by knowing people in the industry. For 25 months, while the network tried to negotiate a merger with ITT to help relieve a financial squeeze, Lower planned full coverage of the 1968 conventions. "But when the merger fell through on the first of January, our budget cuts nicked me for \$8 million," he said. "You don't make that up by firing secretaries and office boys." So ABC developed its plan to retire from constant live coverage of the conventions. ABC will be ready to "go live" when events warrant, Lower said, "but we don't want to play the other fellow's game." He thinks it is important for the program to stick to its own format, which will include nightly discussions, or debates, by William F. Buckley, Jr., and Gore Vidal. Anchor man for the program will be Howard K. Smith. William H. Lawrence, Bob Young, Frank Reynolds, John Scali, and Joseph C. Harsch will be among the participating correspondents. That group may be as perceptive as any network's lineup, but the big thing that ABC has going for it may be enter-

tainment lead-in programming in competition with other networks' convention shows. ABC recalls such statistics as this from 1964: on the first night of the Republican convention none of the networks' convention coverage received as high a rating in New York City as an independent station, WOR-TV, showing Elvis Presley in a movie called *Loving You*.

"If we have some success," Lower said, "it might persuade the other networks to move in our direction in the future. It might even persuade the conventions to reform. They have come into the twentieth century with a nineteenth-century format."

Television has had its effect on conventions, however. The first flickering experiment at the conventions of 1940 had little impact, but Lower would concede that full-scale coverage beginning in 1952 brought about many alterations in the conventions. The politicians played to the cameras, but they also tended to take much of their important decision-making deeper than ever into the traditional smoke-filled rooms.

Whatever its problems in covering events that politicians do not want it to see, television continues to change the structure and look of conventions. Scheduling sessions in the evening for the home audience means that business that could have been conducted in the afternoon often stretches the session into the next morning. Speeches are fewer and shorter. Sweaty orators, bellowing and waving their arms for an hour or more, have yielded almost completely to TelePrompter readers, younger and brisker fellows, some of them very slick and many of them no fun. The Republicans mean to enforce a rule this year sharply limiting nominating and seconding speeches. The Democrats have abolished the public polling of delegations. Both parties are cracking down on sign-waving, chanting demonstrations, hoping to shorten them radically and eliminate hired enthusiasts. Both parties are indoctrinating the delegates in the importance of perfect attendance, looking interested, and not making unexpected motions or fools of themselves on the tube.

WHILE many of the changes brought on by television may be for the best, there is something synthetic about this new kind of convention they are making. There is a lack of spontaneity, a sense of stuffy self-consciousness. There is something unreal about seeing Sander Vanocur starting across the floor to interview a delegate and getting stopped for an autograph. There is a certain unease in knowing that the orator of the moment was practicing a while ago on an offstage mockup of the rostrum,

getting himself in sync with the TelePrompter. I, for one, am wistful for the sweaty old orator in sync with some muse known only to himself, and likely to howl on in the most preposterous way for another 40 minutes. Realists tell me that I am wrong — that in truth we were all bored stiff by the old orator, that we have to accept the times in which we live, that at least we have to trade the old vulgarity for the new.

Yes and no. I doubt that serious harm has yet been done to the fundamental function of conventions — the mechanics of nominating candidates and adopting platforms. And there are advantages to the country in seeing what television is able to show of what is going on. Still, within the context of what television is doing to the rest of the political process in this country, there is something surreal about its obtrusive participation in conventions and its obsession with its own intramural competition.

Nearly everyone, whether or not he understands the cool circuitries of Marshall McLuhan, realizes that television has become a revolutionary force in politics. It is enough to say that the medium's greatest wallop is the way it emphasizes the superficial qualities of a candidate — his physiognomy, mannerisms, "style." This can be crucial in any campaign, national, state, or local. I have the notion, for example, that a presidential preference primary in the era of television is subject to a kind of inflation that is truly dangerous. When the networks move in on a primary in a given state, the contest automatically achieves a greatly magnified national importance, even though candidates may be fighting over a relative handful of delegates. Such primaries often occur amid lethargy, parochial concerns, and confusion about national candidates and issues. The national impact of primaries is attributable in large part to the impact of television itself as a medium — and to commentators' sometimes simplistic interpretations. These primaries are peculiarly vulnerable to warping by the leverage of money. Money means good organization, door-to-door canvasses, local television exposure, mail and newspaper advertising, and drummed-up excitement. A candidate who has huge amounts of money, particularly if he has telegenic "style" to boot, gains an enormous advantage over less fortunate opponents in a brief primary campaign.

So the ultimate effect of television on campaigns before and after the conventions seems to me more dangerous than the effect on the conventions themselves. A convention, until the nomination is made, affords a candidate himself little opportunity to dominate the tube. In any event, conventions are where television with all its trappings is most obvious. This is when an industry that spends so large a part of its time spinning out cotton candy

suddenly insists righteously that it has a public-service responsibility to swarm all over, under, through, and around a news event.

Actually television is in a trap at a political convention. If it agreed just to point its cameras at the surface of events in the hall, the politicians would press their opportunity to put on a self-serving show. When television plunges in to try to find such real news as subsurface deals and dissent, its legions stir up commotion, and the coverage is often illusory anyway. The real decision-making is almost always hidden from the cameras. What we see for the most part is television covering the public version of private arrangements.

The fact is that television coverage of conventions, however disjointed and superficial it may be at times, manages to get across to us a great deal about the way our political system works. We are still a nation of disparate parts. The conventions of each of the national parties are the occasions that bring various coalitions together every four years to pull and haul at one another; to test old power centers and form new ones; to compromise and, yes, to raise a little hell together in a carnival atmosphere. Television reflects it all, if not always clearly. The alternative to the present method of choosing nominees is to "go to the people" with a national presidential primary. But to "go to the people" in the age of mass media would be to hand to television — and to the richer candidates with "style" — an enormous power over the nomination. It would, in my opinion, be a boon to imagery rather than democracy. Television already has enough power — probably too much — in the making of Presidents. It is important to our understanding of one another in the North and South, in ghetto and suburb and countryside, that we hold on to the opportunity to communicate in the convention hall, however chaotic, rather than across the infinite distances (with their deceptive intimacy) of the mass media. A convention hall is a hard place to cover the news instantaneously and articulately, and the caucus room is an almost impossible place. So the result too often is disruptive or trivial. But we can learn to live with problems of coverage if the convention itself is a more sensible and workable instrument than a national primary, as I suspect it is.

Reason does seem to call for restraint by the networks — less obtrusive participation in the conventions, a sense of proportion about the competition among networks when men are competing for President of the United States, maybe even a little reverence for an old institution. If the conventions do not deserve television's reverence, surely they deserve better than a public smothering.

Back to you in the booth, Walter, Chet, David, Howard, but tell the boys to take it easy, will you?

MEMORANDUM

To: *The Atlantic*
From: *Victor S. Navasky*
Subject: *The Freedom Rides Revisited*

As you may recall, seven years ago, in May of 1961, bunches of so-called Freedom Riders bused down south and intentionally provoked the armed mobs who had gathered to greet them with bricks, lead pipes, and Molotov cocktails. Ignoring local ordinances, they traveled in accordance with the deliberate speed limits of the U.S. Constitution. Before it was over, 600 federal marshals were dispatched to keep order, a federal judge issued sweeping injunctions which (a) barred the Ku Klux Klan from interfering with interstate travel and (b) barred the Freedom Riders from engaging in it, and the governor of Alabama declared martial law, but only after advising the riders "to get out of Alabama as quickly as possible."

The biracial bus riders were widely condemned in the Southern press, and Attorney General Robert Kennedy, after much long-distance telephoning on their behalf, called for "a cooling-off period" (to which CORE National Chairman James Farmer, originator of the rides, responded, "We have been cooling off for 100 years. If we get any cooler we'll be in a deep freeze"). Even such enlightened papers as the *Washington Post* urged sponsors of the rides "to take it easy," and the *New York Times* editorialized that "non-violence that deliberately provokes violence is a logical contradiction." Anyway, logical or not, as a result of the rides, the Attorney General got the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to ban segregation in interstate bus terminals; and he further arranged for a private foundation to support a voter-registration drive which would divert troublemakers like

CORE, SNCC, and SCLC from buses to ballots.

Everyone concedes that Justice would not have petitioned the ICC had it not been for the crisis intentionally initiated by the nonviolent Freedom Riders. And most moderate observers retrospectively assume, without ever having examined the results, that here was one instance where burning (a mob slashed the tires of and then burned the Freedom Rider bus at Anniston, Alabama), terrorism (at Montgomery, Alabama, even Justice Department aide John Seigenthaler was knocked unconscious and left lying in the street for twenty minutes while an FBI man on the scene took notes), and rioting (by the crackers) led directly to social reform. Partly to test this assumption, but also to share the contemporary experience of tens of thousands of Southern Negro bus riders, I decided to revisit the original Freedom Rider trouble spots, taking Greyhound and Continental Trailways buses from Washington through Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

The terminals I saw at Anniston, Montgomery, and Birmingham, like those at Charlotte, Atlanta, and in Louisiana, have replaced "White Only" and "Colored Entrance" signs with cardboard copies of ICC antidiscrimination regulations. The back of my ticket was stamped "interstate travel is without regard to race, color, creed or national origin." People of all colors boarding my buses at the big cities sat pretty much where they pleased, although it should be noted that most Negroes pleased to sit at the back of the bus, and most whites, up front. The Negro now washes down the

same soggy doughnuts and greasy hamburgers with the same stale coffee and watery Coke at the same dirty counter as his Caucasian fellow traveler. Where service is cafeteria-style, Negroes don't tend to share six-seat tables with whites, but that seems a matter of preference, and given the average Caucasian bus traveler I don't blame them. By and large, as far as my white eyes could see, there is de facto desegregation in the Southern metropolis. Despite the turbulence following Martin Luther King's assassination, bus riding continued pretty much as usual.

This is not to suggest that *all* of the big city terminals are integrated. Vide, the Trailways terminal in Jackson, Mississippi, which doesn't have any signs up but maintains two adjacent waiting rooms, one of which was populated exclusively by Negroes and was less than half the size of the white terminal. If you eat at the white food counter, you can spy your Negro brethren through a window-sized aperture, eating at their own counter on the other side. But even in a place like Jackson, capital of the Magnolia state and headquarters of the White Citizens Council, the Greyhound terminal is integrated, and the morning I left via Trailways for Columbus, Georgia, two well-tailored Negro ladies were dining in the otherwise all-white section, unmolested, if you don't count a dirty look from the Negro waitress. All of this is a considerable advance over the afternoon a group of riders led by Wyatt Tee Walker, then chairman of the Atlanta SCLC, were arrested for attempting to buy cigarettes and have a cup of coffee in the lunchroom.

Jackson aside, Southern bus segregation, like the Northern Wasp, seems to have settled in the suburbs, where Yankee reporters seldom travel. A determined segregationist, however, could plan a trip around the pickup stops, gas stations, general stores, and smaller terminals. For instance, instead of boarding his bus in Atlanta, he might arrange to start from Douglasville, Georgia, about fifteen miles west of Atlanta. My suspicions that all was not kosher in Douglasville arose when I noticed, as our bus pulled up, two contiguous benches outside the Greyhound waiting room. On one bench, a kind of Central Park gray, sat two whites. On the other, painted Joe Louis brown, sat five squeezed-together Negroes. Although Douglasville was not a "rest stop," I debarked long enough to look in the waiting room (around fifteen hundred square feet), sliced in two by a lunch counter, on the left side of which sat and stood groups of Negroes, with whites on the right. This, I later discovered, is a typical arrangement, although most often food is dispensed from machines, and there is a five-foot-high partition where the counter used to be.

Proceeding south, the informed racist would probably switch from Greyhound to Trailways in

Montgomery, Alabama, which in May, 1961, was the scene of a race riot involving hundreds; today it is desegregated and quiet. Here he would grab a bus for Hurtsboro, Alabama, about twenty miles to the east. My bus didn't even stop in Hurtsboro, but as we passed the dilapidated Trailways terminal, just west of the railroad tracks, I noticed that adjacent to it is a place called "City Grill." Outside is a sign that says "Royal Crown Cola" and under that another sign which says "Colored Entrance," with an arrow pointing down and to the left.

He might then swing over to Jackson, Mississippi, stopping on the way for a game of pinball at the Trailways station in Meridian, a large L-shaped room. When you enter from the back (which is where the bus stops), to your right is a row of benches on which I saw three or four Negroes, which led me to wonder if the management *hires* Negroes to sit on them as a guide to inexperienced passengers now that the signs are down. Anyway, in the Negro section of the terminal (which is about one quarter the size of the main section, despite the fact that from my observation about 70 percent of all bus riders are Negro) are a food counter (with stools rather than tables, which are available in the white section), two telephone booths (four in the white section), six small lockers and one big one (twelve small and two big in the white section); each has its own water fountain, and each has its own stairs leading to its own rest rooms. The whites have a newsstand (there is none in the Negro section), but most important, where the Negro pinball player can only try his hand at "Gigi," the white man can choose from "Masquerade," "Touchdown," "Derby Day," "Sing-Along," and target practice on a "Captain Kid Gun."

While there is frequent service between Jackson and New Orleans, I'd advise getting off at a place like the Greyhound station in Hammond, Louisiana, a few miles north of Lake Pontchartrain. There, the segregated waiting room is set up like a horseshoe. And if the ICC-regulation sign is distracting, he can always go next door to Joe Joe's. Just follow the finger on the hand on the sign that says, "White Way Cafe." About 100 feet off the street (which is where the bus stops) is a sign saying "Birdell and Grover's Colored Cafe," with a hand which points to what appears to be the back of Joe Joe's. The signs don't lie.

I am sure I found all of this more depressing than did the Negro passengers, whose seats I sometimes shared. For most of them, the fight for equal service has moved from the lunch counter to the rest room

Mr. Navasky presides over MONOCLE, an occasional journal of political satire, contributes to numerous magazines, and is completing a book about the Department of Justice under Attorney General Robert Kennedy.

— from the esophagus to the bladder. Buses now contain rest-room facilities, although they are usually out of order. But the problem comes while waiting for the bus. In the smaller towns, where there is only one rest facility, the main function of the ICC order, as far as I can figure out, has been to launch an apparently inexhaustible supply of bathroom-door euphemisms for “White.” My favorites are “Employees Only,” “Private,” and “Out of Order.” I am still trying to figure out the significance of the sign on the rest room in McComb, Mississippi, which says, “For passengers only. Will open thirty minutes before departure. The management.” It strikes me as appropriate that the segregationist’s last holdout is the toilet, but actually, given the quality of most bus station food, the lack of rest facilities is no laughing matter.

The Greyhound stop in Ponchatoula, Louisiana, is a case in point. It is a small store called “Inter-Cities Bus Lines,” with a sign in the window that says, “Authorized Agent for Greyhound.” I drove out there on a Sunday, and Inter-Cities was closed, so I looked for somebody who could tell me what went on inside. Next door is a laundromat with a sign in the window that reads:

“Jet Washeteria
Colored”

The proprietor of the Jet Washeteria is an eighty-eight-year-old man named Lovella Broadeneaux, who looks like a Negro Walter Brennan with a white goatee. I asked Mr. Broadeneaux about rest facilities at the bus stop, and he told me that there were none for colored folks. There was one room and that was marked private and that was for whites. I asked him about facilities at the laundromat, and he said that the white man who owned it had promised to install them, but that was two years ago and nothing had happened yet. At this point, a young Negro, who was listening to the conversation intently, came over and said, “Look, if a Negro want to pee, he got to go in the alley. If he want to shit, he got to go home.” A white lady from east Texas told me, “In my hometown [Timpson] there is only one restaurant, and it is just *assumed* that the Negroes wait for the bus outside. The whites go inside to eat.” And then there are the gas station attendants who apparently belong to some kind of secret key club. A Negro executive in Atlanta observed, “Most of those gas stations where the buses stop have two men’s rooms. But you need a key to get in, and damn if the Negroes don’t always end up with the same key.” I heard numerous tales about (but didn’t actually see any) little old ladies who stand in front of an imaginary white line dividing the bus in two rather than sit down in back. “But don’t you know if a Negro does that,” said my seatmate from Anniston to Birmingham, “the driver would tell him to get

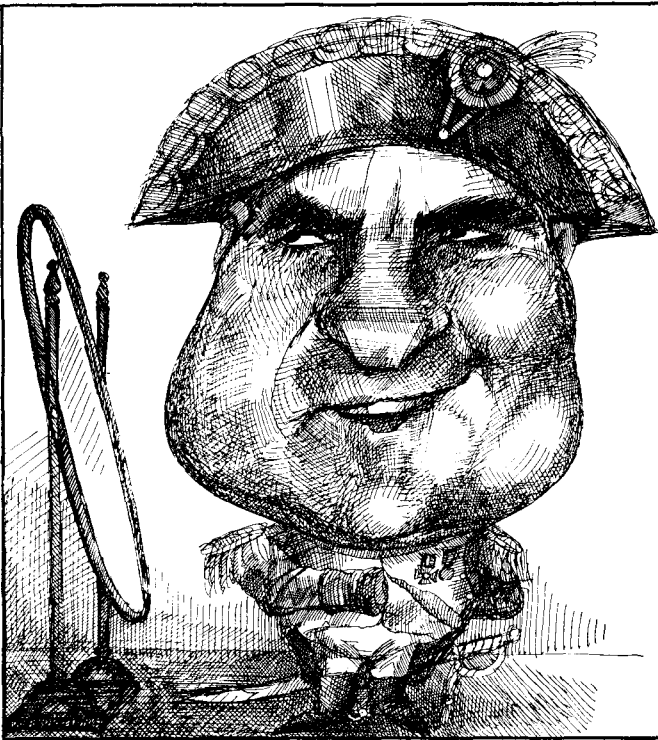
his ass on down the line?” Above and beyond such invisible (to the solitary white traveler) folkways is the environmental imponderable: What is the impact of a segregated community on an island of integration? For instance, as far as I could see, they have integrated the Trailways terminal in Columbia, Mississippi, to the extent that (a) there is only one waiting room and seating is random, (b) the rest room consists of a pay toilet, which I guess is a new kind of poll tax, and (c) all food is sold from machines, which eliminates the necessity of deciding who will sit where.

Across the street is the Marion Theater, where seats sell for 50 cents and \$1. When I handed the girl a \$5 bill, without asking she gave me \$4 change and a \$1 ticket. By some process of telepathy, when the Negro behind me silently passed a dollar, she knew he wanted 50 cents change and a 50-cent ticket, which entitled him to go through a side door up to the balcony. Perhaps this helps explain why a majority (but not all) of the Negroes who boarded the bus at Columbia bypassed some empty front seats and automatically headed for the rear.

What, then, is one to conclude? A former CORE official told me, “If we had done our job right we would have followed up the rides with tests in all those little towns and villages no one ever sees. Maybe that’s where we should have started. But we didn’t have the money. We didn’t have the personnel — you needed a contact at every stop in case you had to make a getaway. And we got sidetracked.” The result: Ponchatoula, Douglasville, Hartsboro, and only God and the local residents know how many more. Does this mean that the ICC regulations are worthless? Or, at a time of black looting, white backlash, riots, racism, and black nationalism, they are irrelevant? Of course not. The rides and regulations resulting therefrom have demonstrably improved the travel conditions for countless Americans. That is the minimum. Other claims might be made: that by ignoring the patronizing pleas for moderation the original Freedom Riders upgraded the Negro’s self-image, helped train tomorrow’s leaders, taught the value and possibilities of nonviolence, spawned still-continuing guerrilla actions. In a way the two Negro ladies in the white Jackson terminal were conducting a freedom ride of their own.

But the fact remains that the Deep South small-town Negro bus rider probably waits in a segregated waiting room, has no john, and automatically moves to the back of the bus. The moral? It is tempting to generalize about the benefits of crisis-politics, but based on my two weeks’ worth of expertise, allow me merely to quote my old political science professor, who insisted on attributing to G. K. Chesterton the observation that “If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing badly.”

SOREL'S UNFAMILIAR QUOTATIONS



A public office is a public lust.

A \$50 award for this quotation goes to Stephen Schleicher



We pry harder.

A \$50 award for this quotation goes to Thomas L. De Fazio



See what the guys in the back room will have.



The medium has a message.

EDWIN O'CONNOR

and the IRISH-AMERICAN PROCESS

by John V. Kelleher

Beginning as a tribute to a departed friend, John Kelleher's reflections grew into a beguiling progress report on the decline or rise — take your choice — of the Irish Americans to the point “when nobody felt very Irish anymore, or had much reason to.” Mr. Kelleher is professor of modern Irish literature and history at Harvard.

WE WERE friends for fifteen years, which seems a very short time now. The friendship was, I think, immediate on both sides, yet one of the chief results of our first meeting was the delineation of our disagreement on a whole range of matters, beginning with the preferability of salt water or fresh water and heading open-endedly toward infinity. The subjects on which we differed never grew fewer. Neither of us, I am quite sure, ever induced the other to change his opinion on anything, or expected to, or ever really wanted to. But the arguments were never tedious. Each of us knew the shutoff point.

For years we had lunch together every month or six weeks. When the lunch was in Cambridge, as it usually was, we always ate in the same restaurant and had exactly the same food. We often wondered why. Neither of us had any particular passion for mushroom omelet; neither ever ordered it anywhere else. Besides, he was a gourmet, and I, as he would be the first to agree, was not. We probably arrived at the menu out of gastronomic aspiration on my side, despair on his. In any case, it took no thought and did not delay the conversation.

I hope it was not ominous that at our last lunch he suggested we go to a Chinese restaurant. I was surprised, and reminded him of his pronouncement, delivered years ago: “Chinese food is all wet hay. There are little dishes of wet hay and big dishes of wet hay, but wet hay is all it is.” But, no, he

said, it really wasn't that bad, and besides he couldn't face up to another omelet. So we ate chow mein and had exactly the same talk we would have had at our regular joint.

I mention this sort of thing, and our continual mild disagreements, to make plain at the start that this is a very limited depiction of him, for he was a many-sided man, with a lot of interests that I did not share, and many other friends, most of whom I did not know; and I am sure that any of these friends would describe him as accurately as I can and yet very differently. What I had in common with him was the same background: second- and third-generation, small-city, middle-class, Catholic, New England American Irish, which meant that though he came from Woonsocket and I from Lawrence, we could share many memories and some attitudes, and never needed to explain them. But after all, we shared these with thousands of others to whom neither of us felt drawn. A strong but by no means total similarity of temperament must have counted for more. We tended to like or dislike other Irish, past or present, for the same visceral reasons. On that we seldom disagreed.

He was very Irish. To a degree often equaled but certainly never surpassed, he had the Irish capacity for being instantaneously right on any topic that interested him, and he would thereupon argue his position with a fluent precision that filled me with envy. In part this was because he actually had

thought deeply about many things; in part it was the fruit of his preoccupation with moral theology. Often, however, it was just plain instinctive response, the Irish ages speaking, and he was being automatically right just like one of his own Buckys or P.J.'s. When that happened, seldom more than a minute passed before he recognized what he was doing. Then a daffy light would come into his eye, and the argument would swiftly dissolve into a burlesque uttered in the voice and with the vocabulary exactly appropriate to some yappy little fanatic or pompous, oracular ass. This, too, with a fluent precision that filled me with envy.



When we first met I had just got myself locked into a lifetime affair with early Irish history, a matter of mistaking a mountain for a good-sized molehill due to the surrounding fog. Among the several subjects in which he then or later felt no faintest interest, early Irish history occupied a commanding place, but the spectacle of my ever growing difficulties with what, after all, I had wished on myself fascinated him, and he was at once involved. For a time he was content to listen gravely to my tentative theories about the date and structure of the corpus of genealogies or the nature of the kingship of Tara, and then to assure me of my error. "Ah, no, no, man, that won't do at all — sheer hallucination — you'll have to go back and work harder at it than that. Of course, whenever you want help, just ask me. But not this afternoon. Not next week either." Presently, however, he retired from the role of mentor. Instead, I was made conscious of the threatening and rather sinister figure of Bucko Donahue, the greatest, indeed the *only*, living expert on Irish annals. Bucko, from whom I sometimes received enigmatic phone calls, postcards of hotel lobbies, and once a letter from Harbour Island in the Bahamas, was a small, rubbery Bahamian Negro of incredible age whose saga is much too complicated to recount here, though it is not amiss to remark that he was the only ex-slave of Bernard Baruch who was educated by the Christian Brothers solely in Latin. Somehow or other he had discovered the Irish annals, genealogies, sagas, and synchronisms, and disdaining books, had worked out all the problems in his head. He had reduced the whole lot to a luminous clarity, which when set down would fill no more than four pages. Yet he still forbore to publish, out of hatred for me.

"God almighty, John, I don't know what you've done to offend him. Maybe you did nothing at all. He's like that — touchy — seething with passion. But I tell you I've never seen any human being re-

garded with the unspeakable loathing he feels for you. He's just waiting till you're ready to publish. Then he'll bring out his four pages and make an utter fool of you. I keep telling him the things you tell me, and you should see the little fellow laugh. He gets hysterical. The tears rolling down that little shrunken face of his and the evil glinting in the tiny little eyes. Oh, I tell you, John, it frightens *me*!"

Bucko's one letter contained libelous aspersions on two of my most respected colleagues, one of whom was reported as playing split weeks as master of ceremonies at a Jersey City burlesque house, the other as set right by a night in the Harbour Island drunk tank after he was caught "sneaking around the Anglican church doing push-ups every morning." Most of the rest will bear quotation.

My dear Kelleher,

It's all cod, you know, this work you're doing on the Annals. Mother of God, I've been through it all a dozen times — the first time I went through the whole business it took me nearly a week. A week lost, is what I say now. Here I was down here in God's glorious sunshine, and all I was doing was racing through the biggest barrelful of hogwash I've ever come across. I reject the Annals *in toto* for two reasons. First, it was all swiped from the Jews. Second, it's all crap anyway. . . .

Well, you just keep right on with your work if you can keep fooling the Harvard lads. I've got no respect for them myself. A few of them come down this way now and again; if we catch them we feed them to the turtles. . . .

I've met O'Connor: A HELL OF AN IMPRESSIVE MAN. IF WE HAD MORE LIKE HIM A SENSIBLE MAN COULD LIVE IN THE WORLD TODAY.

Erin go ha ha

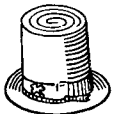
And the signature in a huge, ominous, shaky scrawl.

Then Bucko took to dying at fairly short intervals. His last demise, about five years ago, was when he was eaten by a sea turtle while sleeping under water. I took that as rather a compliment. It was not often that I had any influence on an O'Connor creation, but the sleeping under water bit obviously came from the story of Mac dá Cherdda, one of the two idiot saints of Ireland and one of the few seventh-century Irish personages whose tale Ed ever listened to with interest.

Of course Bucko was not the only one who now arrived to threaten or bother me. There was a whole menagerie of characters who communicated only by telephone. One night I answered the phone to hear a high-pitched, ancient Irish screech on the other end. This time he was an eighty-year-old maniac, somebody like Mother Garvey in *The Last Hurrah*. "Hello!" he shrilled. "Is this Professor Kay-le-her, the great authority on I-rish histhry and I-rish ge-ne-al-o-gy?" As usual I played back. "It is, begor," I said, matching his voice and pitch, "the virry man." "Well, now,

then, Profissor, I have a quistion for you. I have here a virry old and most valuable book, *The History of Ireland* by Abbé Mac Geoghegan and John Mitchel, and the quistion I have to ask you is . . .” Suddenly I realized, My God, this isn’t Ed! And I hadn’t sense enough to keep to the screech and the brogue I started with, but dropped my voice to its natural level. Great explaining and apologizing had to be done before I got shut of that call. There were more hazards in being a friend of Ed’s than were known to the uninitiated.

To be sure, there were also calls made in his own character. He read *The Last Hurrah* over the phone, bit by bit, and I remember the night we agreed happily that he had a best seller that could not miss. We were united, too, in one large miscalculation, expecting that he would be denounced by angry old priests from a thousand pulpits and that every Irish society in the country and most of the Holy Name Societies would pass resolutions condemning him for a dirty bird and a fouler of his own nest. When the book came out, he got hundreds of letters, and, if I recollect aright, only sixteen took the expected line. Instead, he was thanked again and again for the accuracy and fun of his book, and Catholic colleges showered him with invitations to speak. Unbeknownst to us, unnoticed till then by anybody, the public humorlessness that settled down over the American Irish about the turn of the century when the Irish societies drove the Irish comedians off the stage had silently lifted. The Irish could laugh at themselves again. Unfortunately by that time there was not a hell of a lot left to laugh at.



Most of his humor is backward-looking — the old people’s dinner-table talk in *The Edge of Sadness*, for instance — reminiscence or survival of a generation in which character had such free play that what now seems wildly exaggerated or eccentric was nothing out of the ordinary. How much of the comedy in *The Last Hurrah* is actually in Skeffington’s recollections; how much more of it is exemplified in characters like Ditto Boland or Cuke Gillen, who, blessedly all unwitting, are on the verge of extinction. The young are seldom funny: indeed, the younger, distinctly the unfunnier. One could cite, to be sure, the boobish “reform” candidate, Kevin McCluskey, with his telegenic family and his rented telegenic dog, but McCluskey is not funny as an individual and there is nothing very merry about what he fronts for. The only real exception is Father Danowski, the baroque Polish curate in *The Edge of Sadness*. He is funny enough. And he is treated with the underlying tenderness otherwise

reserved for the old folks. But then, though he is little more than a boy, he belongs as a Polish American to a generation roughly equivalent to that of the narrator’s Irish-American father — a fact which I am not certain occurred to his author.

In most ways Ed O’Connor was a present-minded man. He was urbane, well informed, concerned with politics as a citizen, full of the sense of how much needs desperately to be done here and now, and always very interested in the young. He was impatient with sentimental, unhistorical praise of the good old days. Like Goldsmith, whom he admired, he was a very sane writer, well aware of abnormality and viciousness but dealing by preference with that smaller, more ordinary range of aberrations which we count as reasonably normal human conduct. I think that one of his fundamental assumptions was that the human mixture in every age and clime had about the same general proportions of decent men and rogues and fools. But he did not assume that every age or every phase of society inhibited or, alternatively, called forth and rewarded the same qualities and responses. Some were definitely more inclined toward evil than others. Some were relatively good — like the society we both had known as boys.

It was not only his humor that was backward-looking. He looked back, too, for his standards of normality. Or he seemed to. In his books the basic recurrent pattern is of something coming unexpectedly to an end, generally something complicated and of long standing. To the casual eye it has appeared sound, but now as it starts to come apart the observer (the narrator) realizes that actually the signs of approaching dissolution have been all about and unmistakable, most noticeably a blind, self-satisfied irrelevance to present conditions. If the observer then turns to what is now not so much beginning as emerging, already largely developed, from under the wreckage, he is likely to feel no more than a very wary hope. The newly emergent may offer fresh promise, but it is a promise strictly limited by the weaknesses of this fallen flesh. After all, the old, too, was once new and shiny and full of ruthless vitality, and blindly, self-satisfiedly unaware that no generation escapes the consequences of original sin.

You may wonder, where is the hope or normality in that? Well, it is not either in the new, which has not yet life’s lessons, or in the old, which by this time has forgotten them. The normality he was looking for was the mature complexity of the ordinary; and you look for that somewhere in the middle of the process. He and I first knew the Irish-American process toward the end of its heyday. Our parents knew it in its prime. When we had grown up we knew that that phase of society, though it looked eternal to us as boys, was transi-

tional in the extreme, and could not have lasted long under any circumstances. It had come into being about the turn of the century when a modest prosperity had become general among the Irish, most of whom by then had been born and educated here. Many symptoms signaled its rapid demise — the rise of the funeral home and the destruction of the wake; the death of the old people, the last links with that vanished mid-nineteenth-century Ireland from which we were all originally recruited; the disappearance of the genial, uncomplimentary nicknames; and finally, the lack of any continuing force, like discrimination, or afterward the resentment of remembered discrimination, strong enough to hold the society together from without or within. Whatever happened, there came a time when nobody felt very Irish anymore, or had much reason to. By the late 1940s that society was practically all gone. The people were still there; their lives were, if anything, more complicated than ever; but not in terms of the familiar, habitual complexity that was so harmless and satisfying and whose passing he regretted.

A lot of our talk was swapping stories about all that. Many of his were used, more or less altered, in his books — but that well was deep and full, as would soon have been apparent.



When he died he was happily at work on two novels at once. One was to be built around the narrator's recollections of boyhood, thirty-five years ago. The passages he read over the phone were about the boy sitting on the backstairs of his grandfather's drugstore, listening to the discussions between the grandfather and the men who dropped in daily to talk and argue. That, plainly, was going to be a very tender novel. The other, as he described it, was to be about a cardinal-archbishop, a man of eighty, neither a reactionary nor a fervent ecumenicist, who finds himself wondering at times whether he is simply presiding over the end of the whole show, and later realizes that he is only at the beginning of an act. Judging by what he wrote of it, it would have been a strong, densely constructed book, and in all likelihood the funniest since *The Last Hurrah*.

While O'Connor's belief in Catholicism never lessened, he was finding the Church increasingly discomfiting. He remarked that he had been all for liturgical reform in theory but had not counted on a Mass in English that demanded of the communicant a tin ear. Like his fictional cardinal, he was no reactionary. He knew in detail the necessity for reform. He was keenly aware, too, that essential change had been delayed so long and was

so poorly prepared for that what should have come as rich, healthy development arrived with the simplicity of an avalanche. He spoke feelingly of development. Newman was his hero. By nature he was hostile to all urgers of formulas for attaining perfection in one or two glorious installments. Yet his irritation at what he considered the largely needless disruption of cherished rituals was felt not so much for himself as for older people, especially old priests who asked only to be allowed to continue the old liturgy and devotions, as privately as possible, for the remainder of their own lives, and were refused. For them he had deep sympathy. For himself, though he resented being deprived of the familiar and habitual, rich in associations gathered since childhood, he could get along, even if it meant shopping around for the "least offensive Mass." As a matter of fact he could have got along on harder fare even than that. His faith was in no danger.

I think that the general shape of the cardinal novel can be deduced from the less than thirty pages he finished. It would be a continuation and deepening of the movement already strongly defined in his best novel, *The Edge of Sadness*, a movement toward the future rather than to a fondly remembered past. It would be the record of a subconscious search for essentials and of the repeated, astonished discovery that these are not at all what or where one had always taken for granted. It would be the discovery of the ubiquity of grace in small and unprepossessing packets. And thus a justification of faith.

Near the opening of the fragment the cardinal discovers that he has cancer and has but a few months, possibly only a few weeks, to live. He is a bit shocked but not surprised. Nothing surprises this experienced old stoic very much, least of all his realization of how often he is mistaken in his impressions and assessments, for he has no pretensions to infallibility, and he knows that however uncertain he may be in these days of reform and revolution within the Church, everybody else is equally so. All is drifting and changing. No man is really in control.

Without altering his routine he sets about putting his house in order. But how? "The archdiocese was in fairly good shape; he was not a bad administrator, he knew that, and twenty years ago, he reflected, he would have felt confidence and even pride in what he was leaving behind him. Now he was not so sure. Suddenly the new age had come in, and with it had come the new demands: had he met them? At all? What would his successor find?"

Naturally he wonders who his successor will be. Much of the rest of the book, I imagine, would have been taken up with the possible candidates and their

supporters and enemies; and O'Connor's gifts for character-drawing would have got great exercise from this parade — the worried conservatives and hopeful liberals, the opportunists and speculators, the idealists, the honestly bemused, the plain good men and elegantly trimmed trimmers, the impressive empty barrels, the cocksure expositors of the wave of the future, the slit-mouthed reactionaries, the plentiful boobs and nitwits, lay and clerical — all vocal, all variously but equally wrong or inadequate. About these, about himself, about the Church, the cardinal, often mistaken and seldom wrong, would make discovery after discovery, and no longer without surprise. At the end, I think, he would be unworried, for though he would have come to understand that while the tide of change has only begun to flow, and no man can say what, if any, of the familiar landmarks it will leave, all that it can do to the essentials is to reveal them anew, for a while, not to destroy them, and that it is given to no man to say exactly what the essentials are. Then a final mistake would come to light, that the diagnosis was wrong, that he has not got cancer. And this would not matter a great deal, for he will die soon anyway, a thing of moderate moment in the life of a man who has done his best and has trust.

The Edge of Sadness already offered proof that O'Connor's looking backward for the good was more apparent than real. He was no sentimentalist. If he looked at the immediate future with mounting concern, as I think most sensible men do, he was not afraid of it and had no thought but of the need for getting on with the search for justice. Least of all did he imagine that the good men became scarcer when Irish America began to evaporate into the haze of history.

Like most humorists he was anything but a bouncing optimist. Many indeed were the men and slogans on which he turned a bleak eye: the God-love-you-boy-and-keep-the-faith kind of Irishman with a heart like an ice cube; all social climbing, but particularly the Yankee variety; the sort of people who swarm together publicly to give each other medals for inter-something tolerance; what passes for politics in this Commonwealth; what passes for social responsibility with some Boston bankers; the cry that we — Irish or Italian or whoever — made it on our own, and so could the Negroes if they had the gumption. And of course the war — another matter on which we disagreed.

Yet he was equally far from pessimism: Mark Twain's anguished despair of the God Damned Human Race. There is a passage in *The Edge of Sadness* that I think exactly expresses his enduring assessment of human nature.

We all share in a shattering duality — and by this I don't mean that soggy, superficial split that one so often sees: the kind of thing, for example, where the gangster sobs uncontrollably at an old Shirley Temple movie. I mean the fundamental schism that Newman referred to when he spoke of man being forever involved in the consequences of some "terrible, aboriginal calamity"; every day in every man there is this warfare of the parts. And while this results in meanness and bitterness and savagery enough, God knows, and while only a fool can look around him and smile serenely in unwatered optimism, nevertheless the wonder of it all is to me the frequency with which kindness, the essential *goodness* of man does break through, and as one who has received his full measure of that goodness, I can say that for me, at least, it is in the long succession of these small redemptive instants, just as much as in the magnificence of heroes, that the meaning and glory of man is revealed.

That of course is a fictional character speaking, but it has the inflection of his own voice and thought.

He was a good man. He was one of the freest men I have ever known, and doubtless because of that, one of the gayest. I am afraid I have made him seem an unwontedly sober, if not indeed a somber, figure. In fact I have scarcely a memory of him which has any such shadow on it — in token whereof, this last one.

We were crossing the Public Garden one day just after *The Last Hurrah* made the best-seller list, when he was set upon by a newly warm friend who had to express his delight with his pal's success. However, he admitted to critical reservations, too. "The book goes great, Ed, up to where Skeffington starts to die, but after that it sort of trails off. The old punch goes out of it."

Ed's eyes waltzed and he drew a short breath, familiar signs of inspiration. "George," he said, "I might have known you'd see that. Of course you're absolutely right. As a matter of fact, I've just written a new ending, for the movie version. This time Skeffington doesn't die after the election. He enters the priesthood. Mother Garvey gets ordained too. Then years go by, and Skeffington is the oldest living monsignor in the archdiocese, and he's celebrating Easter Mass at the cathedral, with Mother Garvey as his deacon. When he raises the Host at the consecration, the camera follows his hands. But it doesn't come down again. It keeps going up and up, slowly; and you see the shafts of light coming down from the chancel windows; and then you begin to hear organ music, and then the angels singing, faint and far away. Skeffington and Mother Garvey have dropped dead together. Right on the altar."

"Jee-sus, Ed!" said the critic reverently. "Now you *really* got something!"

YOUNG POETS

The ATLANTIC'S door is always open to promising new writers, and here in this Young Poets section we introduce four fresh talents to our readers.

EUROPA'S LETTER

BY FANNY HOWE

Shy animal
ancient white Leviathan bull,
heavy sinews holding still:
I think I knew that you were ZEUS
and stroked your coat whispering
"Bull, come off it,
I see through your disguise," just as
Beauty sighed to Beast
Va, le magnifique, va ou je vais . . .

The scent of undomesticated skin
is innocent. I caught a whiff on you
when we ran into
the spring wind. Horns honked where geese
did once; your grace saved us.
My sweet, you didn't strip to Zeus
until we crossed a sea embracing salt
and rocking.

But now I can't exactly say
what happened yesterday.
We lay, not inert, but nearly so;
your salty fur, now flesh,
heavy on my own.
We weren't alone
but never quite together either.
I was really scared.

The matter in your head pressed
next to mine: a different matter
than my own pressed next to yours.
I wanton and you wanting what?

Men to women are mysteries
and as for gods to mortals . . .
Well, I loved the flesh,
your shaded smile.

Now I would rather Hera turn me
to a heifer than see you say
good-bye again like that:

shy, lying, sorry, glad.
My response, produced in a flash,
rivers of giggling jargon,
inconsequential to an immortal.

And today I woke up thinking
it's time to get married
or pregnant at least. Out here
alone on the island of Crete.

SOME MATTERS
CONCERNING
THE OCCUPANT

BY GARRISON KEILLOR

One. Terms of occupation: a space
between two or more walls or
wall-like structures, as: a face,
a street, door, or other means of entrance;
an enclosure; provided the floor
is easily visible. "Entrance"
shall also be taken to mean
"exit."

No animals or children are allowed,
occupant shall not disturb the air
or drive sharp nails into his hands.

Two. To leave the premises,
turn out the lights and lock the door.
After a length of time,
all not above mentioned shall revert
to its original understanding.
The space shall be considered void.

This Notice Shall Not Be Destroyed.

BEASTS

BY EDWARD BRASH

Creation spent, each walked
in that first weather
newly-gaited, not guessing schemes
between the stepping thing and what is stepped on,
how gallops and the plain combine
and fins require sea.

Each learned a way of going forward,
a separate step reflecting self
so masterfully it seemed not learned
but born into the bone;
footprints and the space between
were names in that dumb age.

God those beasts grew beautiful;
every impulse or alarm invented
another wild retreat perfect even
before complete; they could be still as wood;
but it was for hunger they reserved
tremendous, desperate miracles.

Was the leopard mid-air between branch
and prey when we first saw and brought him down,
bee and petal wed when honey
first pursued our lips? Few noticed
one death, some plundered flowers
or realized paradise was ours.

In different beds, like different shoots,
instead of traveling, man
took root; his step became deliberate
and he made paths
repeating it; the mind he made
robbed body to attire brain.

Wherever he settled, their mystery fled,
he dreamed them damaged, dreamed them dead;
as wells to rivers, man his beasts
reduces but cannot replace;
so driven from one wilderness
they found in him wilderness again.

MEMOIRS OF F. LOXY

BY JEAN GOLDSCHMIDT

I

It might have been Grandfather
dug this hole; its musty floor
now littered with chewed bones
and pellets of scatter-guns
gnawed from his heavy hide —
he was a night marauder:
fat sheep dogs woofed at him,
and chickens choked with cackling
when he slid in.

II

Father was long, sly, red, and evident;
but came to a day, when dry leaves
clattered along the ground,
flew up and fell;

we woke up cold, our tails
curled over noses; extricated
out of the shivering heap,
we shook ourselves warm.

We knew he'd gone, but hoped
for blood that night, to try our needle teeth;
but mother came alone
and we gnawed old,
unyielding bones, imaginary meat.

Twelve hounds, a spotted gang
caught him examining
a rabbit hole. They slobbered, grinned;
he whirled away, a pointed streak;
redoubled, danced
from tree to tree, down a yellow slope —

But stubble pierced his paws
and a stone wall, the drooling ring
and thump of hoofs decided him.

III

My brothers now encircle
necks of the withered rich;
each day, I find it harder to be sly;
prefer to sit,
long intervals, alone.

Food comes to me: a flock
of flapping birds,
gabbling inanities: "the sky
is falling!"

In the silence that ensued
I pointed nose to air; observed
effect of wind on leaves:
they turn
underside up; a flick
of green to white, impending rain.

Beyond,
no crack appears as yet
(but then
my view is incomplete).

DEMOCRACY ON ICE

A Study of American Policy toward Dictatorship in Greece

by Elizabeth B. Drew

Since Britain's withdrawal after World War II, the United States has been self-appointed guarantor of democratic government and international security for Greece, but in recent months Washington has extended aid and comfort to a military junta that has suspended constitutional government and shows little desire for reviving it. How does such foreign policy get made? Is it consistent with the interests of the Greeks — or the Americans? The ATLANTIC's Washington editor gives some discomfiting answers in this deep analysis of the evolution of policy-making in the nation's capital.

IN MARCH, 1947, President Truman sent to Congress a special message urging that the United States help Greece "to become a self-supporting and self-respecting democracy." The "Truman Doctrine" was followed by the Marshall Plan and another collective arrangement to secure Europe against Communism, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a partnership based on devotion to "the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law." Twenty years and one month after Mr. Truman's appeal for aid to Greece, a small group of colonels, using NATO arms and a NATO plan, overthrew the Greek parliamentary government. King Constantine protested to our ambassador that some "incredibly stupid, ultra-right-wing bastards" had "brought disaster to Greece." Our ambassador cabled Washington that it was "the rape of Greek democracy."

The U.S. government declined to denounce the coup, continued to arm the junta with all but the heaviest military equipment, and has been moving toward a resumption of more military aid and normal relations with a regime that has suspended constitutional government and is showing no haste in putting it back, jailed thousands and tortured some, and even purged the military force which the United States had built up at great expense. Leaving moral considerations aside, for morality is an

elusive and perhaps even dangerous basis for foreign policy, it is worth examining our Greek policy in the terms in which the policy-makers defend it: that we have had no choice, that it is realistic, that it is in our interests, especially our interest in preserving NATO. It is also instructive to see how we got to this point.

An objective statement of the history of the U.S. involvement in Greece inescapably has a ring of liberal paranoia. It is simply a fact, however, that from the time that the United States replaced Great Britain as, in effect, Greece's protector after World War II, a highly visible and heavy U.S. presence — the embassy, the military, and the CIA — cast its lot with Greek royalist-rightist-military circles. We approved prime ministers, interfered in elections, and passed upon military promotions. The CIA considered Greece of special importance for operations in the area, and in the post-war period it trained and controlled the Greek intelligence agency.

The palace and the military were the instruments for overcoming the Communist insurgency and general chaos that followed World War II. During the war, the resistance movement against the Nazi occupiers had been taken over by Communists; a full-scale civil war ensued after the invaders withdrew. An exhausted Great Brit-

ain was in no condition to restore order, so the United States, through the Truman Doctrine, moved to offset the real possibility of a Communist take-over. The royal family, returned to its unstable throne by a plebiscite after the war, was considered at the time, even by the substantial numbers of anti-royalists in Greece, as important for restoring unity. There was no center to speak of at that point. The palace secured its power through alliances with the military, the highly protected business oligarchy, and rightist politicians. It saw to it that no prime minister became too independent. The United States saw to it that whoever was prime minister viewed Greece's needs, particularly its need to arm for the cold war, as the United States did. The American ambassador hunted with the King; the embassy staff circulated with rightist politicians and businessmen; all were agreed that Greece must be protected from internal and external Communism; it all worked very well; it was all done in the name of democracy.

In the early 1960s, the growing centrist Center Union Party, headed by George Papandreou, who charged the Karamanlis government with protection of special interests and with failure to address Greece's deep economic and social problems, did increasingly well at the polls. In 1963, Karamanlis became too independent for the royal family's tastes, and he was eased out of office. Papandreou defeated Karamanlis in a 1963 election, but with an insufficient plurality to form a government. He refused a coalition with the Communist-front party, and early in 1964 won office on his own with the highest percentage in modern Greek history. Papandreou installed his son, Andreas, as Minister to the Prime Minister, one of the most powerful government positions. From that point on, Andreas Papandreou became the focus of Greek political upheavals and American participation in them.

ANDREAS PAPANDREOU was born and educated in Greece, but while at the University of Athens during the 1930s, was imprisoned and exiled for participation in a left-wing student movement resisting the military dictatorship established by the royal family. For the next twenty years, he lived in the United States, married an American, and became an American citizen. He earned a Ph.D. in economics at Harvard, served in the U.S. Navy during World War II, was recognized as a distinguished economist through teaching at the University of Minnesota and heading the economics department at Berkeley, and was active in the campaigns of Hubert Humphrey and Adlai Stevenson. He returned to Greece to work on

economic planning during the Karamanlis government, and then joined his father's government.

Brilliant, arrogant, charming, given to demagoguery, and, particularly at the beginning, politically inept, Andreas Papandreou fought all his battles at once and thereby managed to antagonize concurrently the palace, the military, the conservative business circles, and the American establishment in Greece. He forced through a plan giving the Greek cabinet, rather than the CIA, direct control over the Greek intelligence agency. He called for social reform, for greater independence for Greece under NATO, for a reduction of palace dickering in military and political affairs. With the help of his American economist friends, he drew up the first comprehensive economic plan for Greece, and pushed a reform program similar to Western European social democratic programs. He played to Greek popular opinion on Cyprus, and with his father rejected the American proposal for a division of the island, a stand for which top State Department officials never forgave them. Suspected as he was by both right and left of actually being an American CIA agent, resented as he was for entering Greek politics at the top after a twenty-year absence, Andreas Papandreou played hard on the nationalistic chords and refused to compromise with the ruling circles. In time, he became the most popular political figure in Greece.

The response of the highly annoyed American Embassy staff was to drop him. On the whole, the staff never established the same diplomatic or social rapport with the Center Union party that it had had with Karamanlis' party. When the coming political crisis developed, only the American chargé d'affaires, Norbert Anschuetz, made it a point to keep in contact with Andreas Papandreou, and that was done on the quiet, in the private homes of Americans living in Athens.

Early in 1965, General George Grivas, the right-wing royalist commander of the Greek Army on Cyprus and rival of Archbishop Makarios, with whom Andreas had allied himself, reported to King Constantine that Andreas, a highly popular figure on Cyprus, had been plotting with some dissident troops there, who had formed a club called *Aspida*, to overthrow the government in a "Nasserite" coup. A few months after the sensational "Aspida plot" story broke, George Papandreou became locked in dispute with the King over Papandreou's desire to fire his defense minister, who had been dealing with the King and Grivas against Andreas, and appoint himself to the post. Over that issue, the Papandreou government was ousted in July, 1965. There were serious riots, which proved to some of the American Embassy staff that Andreas was dangerous.

The events of 1965 were the beginning of the

end of Greek parliamentary democracy, and led directly to the current situation. In the confrontation between an unpopular royal family and popular political figures, American policy-makers were on the side of the palace.

For the next several months, there was political chaos. The King dared not call elections, for the Papandreous would have won. Anschuetz, now in charge of the embassy in the absence of a U.S. ambassador for several months, informed the King that the United States would not approve a dictatorship, which the King was considering, but that it would go along with moves that were technically constitutional. Whether the King's subsequent moves were or were not constitutional is subject to some debate. He made several attempts to establish a new government through the more palace-oriented minority of the Center Union party. His tactic was to stall for time, meanwhile working to destroy the Papandreous' popularity. Despite our official neutrality, some of the embassy's staff members helped him. Andreas, they had decided, was inimical to America's interests, and his return to power should be forestalled. If this meant forestalling elections, so be it. They assumed that the Papandreous' following was a passing phenomenon. American Embassy employees and military representatives circulated through Athens denouncing Andreas Papandreou. Americans were in the chambers of parliament urging deputies to cooperate with the King's attempts to form a rump government. Although Andreas Papandreou was not brought to trial for the Aspida plot, their position was that of course they couldn't be sure, but, you know, where there's smoke . . . One former American official who was in Athens at the time argues that we should have been using our extensive influence "to prevent the subversion of constitutional government. . . . We were extremely influential," he says. "But many people in Washington and the embassy and the military didn't like Andreas, and were happy. It wasn't just that we didn't protest; we cheered. We didn't look ahead one inch."

The State Department says that it was surprised by the coup of April 21, 1967, but the only surprise could have been that it was not the coup it was expecting. Elections had finally been scheduled for May, almost two years after the Papandreous were ousted. It was increasingly clear, however,

that despite everyone's efforts, the Center Union party, with Andreas Papandreou now at the zenith of his popularity, would win. The United States knew that if that happened, a group of generals, with the cooperation of the King, was planning to seize power. The CIA had suggested that in order to forestall the generals' coup, it set to work to win the election for the right, or at least strengthen the right to the point where the Center Union could not win. (The form of CIA interference would be the usual in such circumstances: money for publicity, for buying off election officials, for stuffing ballot boxes, and so on.)

Secretary of State Dean Rusk vetoed the suggestion for three reasons: it would be a messy business; it would place the United States squarely in opposition to a reform movement; and for what is known in government circles as the "Bay of Pigs reason," it was a shaky proposition in which the CIA could not guarantee the outcome. Which reason weighed most heavily in the decision is not clear. And so we waited for the inevitable. The American ambassador, Phillips Talbot, in several

conversations with the King indicated that the United States hoped that Greece would not be taken over by a military junta, and that if the King did feel that he must suspend the constitution, he wouldn't do it for very long. We hoped, it was suggested — indirectly, of course, for one must be delicate in talking to a monarch about his plans for a coup — that he would be just as constitutional about it as he could. But, as one official in Washington puts it, "We were ready for the generals."

Exactly why the colonels stole the coup from the generals is not known. It may be that they feared that the King, who after all had been contemplating his coup for some time, was temporizing once again. It may be that they knew how the Americans felt about the Papandreous, and believed that since the United States was at least implicitly concurring in the King's coup, it would not object to this change of personnel. It may have come from their own frustrations within the ranks, for these were "country boys" from the lower middle class who were never going to rise to the military top. Colonel Papadopoulos, the leader of the coup, at one point the contact man between the CIA and Greek intelligence, had a controversial reputation as a fanatic Communist-hunter. Their



reasons may simply have been what they said they were: their desires to “purify” Greece politically and morally and to save it from Communism. It is their literal carrying out of this program which has given the junta its comic-opera overtones: the banishment of beards and miniskirts, the forbidding of the playing of music of suspected Communists. And also its ominous ones: the widespread arrests, continuing on a smaller scale today, the apparent resort to torture, the prohibition of gatherings of more than five persons, and so on.

In any event, on April 21, a triumvirate of relatively low ranking officers — Colonel Papadopoulos, Brigadier Patakos, and Colonel Makarezos — took from the drawer the “Prometheus Plan,” a NATO contingency plan for a military coup in the event of a Communist take-over, rolled out the NATO tanks, and seized Greece.

As it happened, they didn’t have very much of it at first. The Navy, the Air Force, and the Army in the north, which outnumbered the southern army ten to one, were not with them. Therefore, what happened in the early hours of the coup made the difference. Since the colonels acted in the King’s name, there was some confusion in Athens and in Washington at first as to just whose coup this was. Then, when Talbot made his way to the palace, he found that King Constantine was quite beside himself. Condemning the “incredibly stupid, ultra-right-wing bastards” who had stolen his coup, he asked if the United States might send marines to help him and the generals regain control, and requested that we try to convince the junta to take his orders, and that we land Sixth Fleet helicopters to evacuate his family if necessary. Talbot, by this time identifying our fortunes with those of the King, was deeply upset and sent his cable decrying “the rape of Greek democracy.”

Sending the marines was never seriously considered. The Sixth Fleet cruised closer to the Greek shore, in case evacuation of Americans and the royal family became necessary, as it did not. The real issues in Washington in the immediate aftermath of the coup were the usual ones in such a situation — that is, a coup from the right, not the left: how soon and how strongly does the United States react, in terms of denouncing the action, suspending diplomatic contacts, and terminating economic and military assistance? A quick, strong, negative reaction on the part of the United States might have various levels of effects: at most, it might unhorse a new, if shaky, junta; in between, it can give us a strong bargaining position with a new government; at the least, it keeps the United States from being identified from the outset with a new regime of doubtful capacities and intentions.

Thus, when there was a military coup in Peru in 1962, the United States denounced it and removed

the ambassador and suspended the aid programs until the junta set a date for elections and guaranteed a return to civil government; in 1964, there was a free election. Our language can be quite strong. In 1963, Secretary Rusk responded to right-wing coups in the Dominican Republic and Honduras: the United States views the situation “with utmost gravity. . . . Under existing conditions . . . there is no opportunity for effective collaboration . . . or for normalization of diplomatic relations. We have stopped all economic and military aid to these countries.”

Ambassador Talbot pleaded with Washington for an early, very strong statement denouncing the Greek coup. His request was not granted. The explanation of this and everything that has followed lies essentially in who were the policy-makers in Washington, and how they were doing it.

LUCIUS D. BATTLE, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, an able diplomat who had served in various State Department posts during three Administrations, most recently as Ambassador to the United Arab Republic, had been installed in his new job for only six days when the colonels struck. He was essentially unfamiliar with the Greek situation, and he was and has remained deeply absorbed in other problems in the vast region of his responsibility. In his first days in office, a crisis in Yemen was budding, and the events which led to the June war in the Middle East were in train.

Battle, therefore, had to rely on his assistants: Stuart Rockwell, his deputy, and Daniel Brewster, director of Greek affairs, both career Foreign Service Officers. Rockwell’s predilection throughout has been for an accommodation with the colonels. Brewster came at the problem with decided views of his own. He is *the* Greek hand at the State Department, not simply because of his formal position but also because he was born and educated in Greece, and served in Greece from 1947 through 1952, when the United States was establishing its ties there, and again from 1961 through most of 1965 when the embassy staff was deciding that the Papandreuos, particularly Andreas, would not do. As the Greek policy went up the line: Rockwell was inclined to agree; Battle was inclined to defer; and when the policy questions went from the sixth floor of State to the seventh, Secretary Rusk and Undersecretary Nicholas Katzenbach were preoccupied with other matters.

At the White House, in the National Security Council staff, Walt Rostow was as buried in Vietnam and other major crises as were the Secretary and Undersecretary. His staff was said to have had

some reservations about Greek policy, but if so, they did not put up much fight. The only White House voice some State Department men recall hearing with any clarity was that of Mike Manatos, a presidential aide for congressional relations who was relaying the concern of the liberal elements of the essentially conservative Greek-American community. Recently, however, some Greek-American businessmen complained to the State Department about the junta's treatment of business in Greece, and their complaints made an impression.

The Pentagon's overriding concern was that nothing disrupt the military preparedness of Greece under NATO, or the ongoing operations of the military assistance program. The decisive group was the Joint Chiefs of Staff, whose traditional position has been that Greece is the "southern flank" of NATO, and it must be prepared at all times for an attack from Bulgaria. The Pentagon should not question the likelihood of an attack by the Bulgars, argue the Chiefs; it should be prepared for all eventualities; besides, who can read the mind of the Communist enemy? To the extent that Greece is not prepared, the argument goes, if the Bulgars do attack, the United States will have to make up the difference, so the more Greece is armed, the less likely it is that the United States would have to fight there. If, as the Greek junta did, a government dismisses 500 of the NATO-trained officers and purges many of the troops, that is unfortunate, and we shall just have to start from there.

There are some civilians in the Pentagon who question that Greece is a "flank" in classic military terms, and doubt Greece's strategic importance to NATO. But, says one of the doubters, "That concept was here when we got here, and it will be here when we leave." There is also some ambiguity as to whether the substantial Greek troops and weapons positioned in the Thracian plains in the north are poised against Bulgaria or against Turkey. The way in which the concept of Greece's military importance to NATO has reinforced the junta has been deplored by, among others, such a conservative as Mrs. Helen Vlachos, publisher of Greek newspapers and now in exile in London: "NATO is something we put our signature on when we were free and which was to keep us free. At this moment NATO is protecting the junta." The junta survives "entirely because of NATO power — NATO money, NATO weaponry, NATO jam in the morning, NATO suits, NATO everything you see."

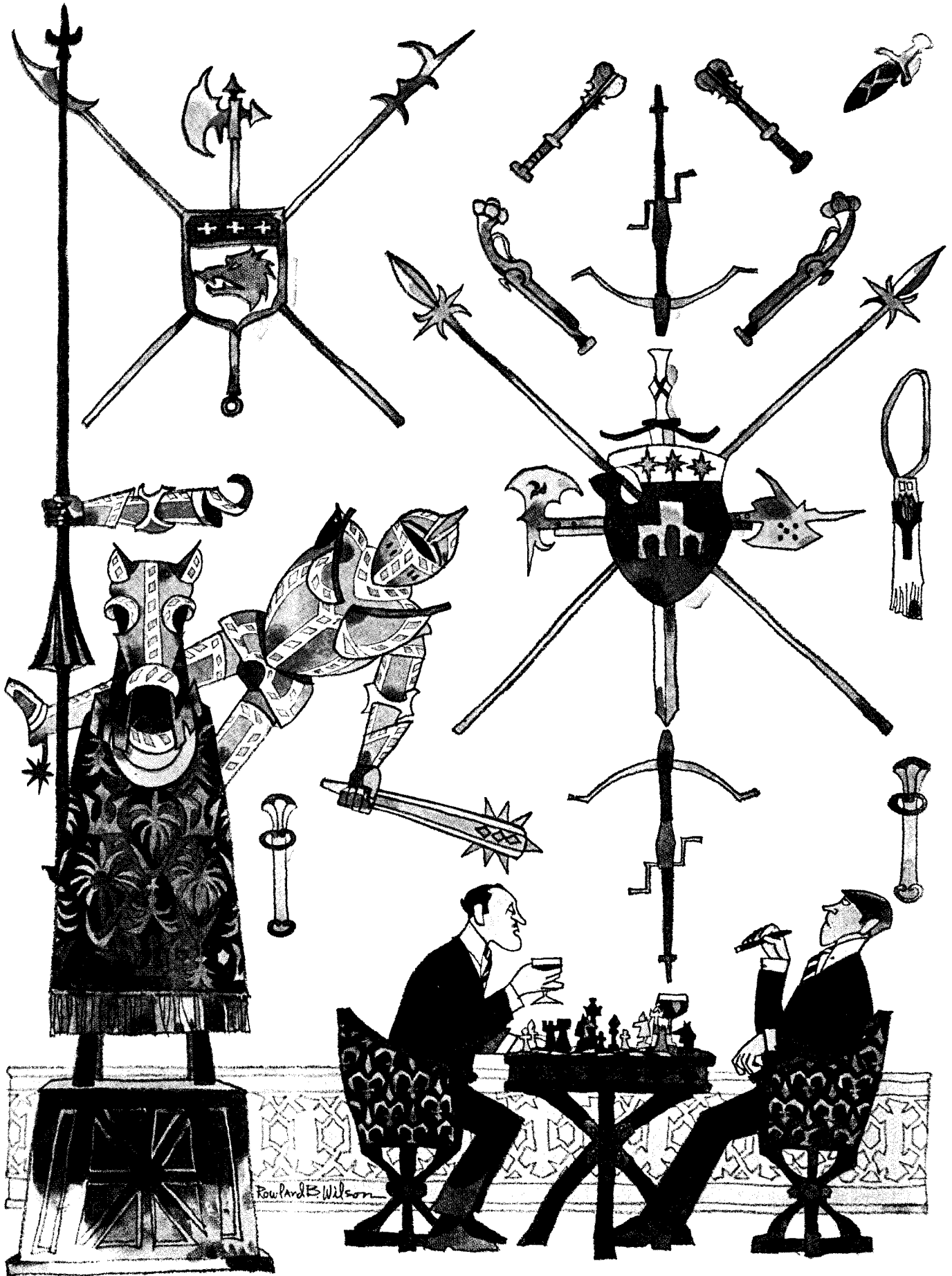
And while the United States focuses on the "Southern flank," other parts of NATO have fallen out with our Greek policy. Norway and Denmark have suspended diplomatic relations with Greece; the German government has sus-

pended military assistance; and the American policy is highly unpopular with the European social democratic parties, and with the prestigious Council of Europe. Some high-level civilians in the Pentagon have had some concern about the policy decisions regarding Greece. But these have tended to be the same men who were offering strong objections within the government to the escalation of the Vietnam War; with no prodding from the State Department to counter the military impetus of Greek policy, they fought other battles.

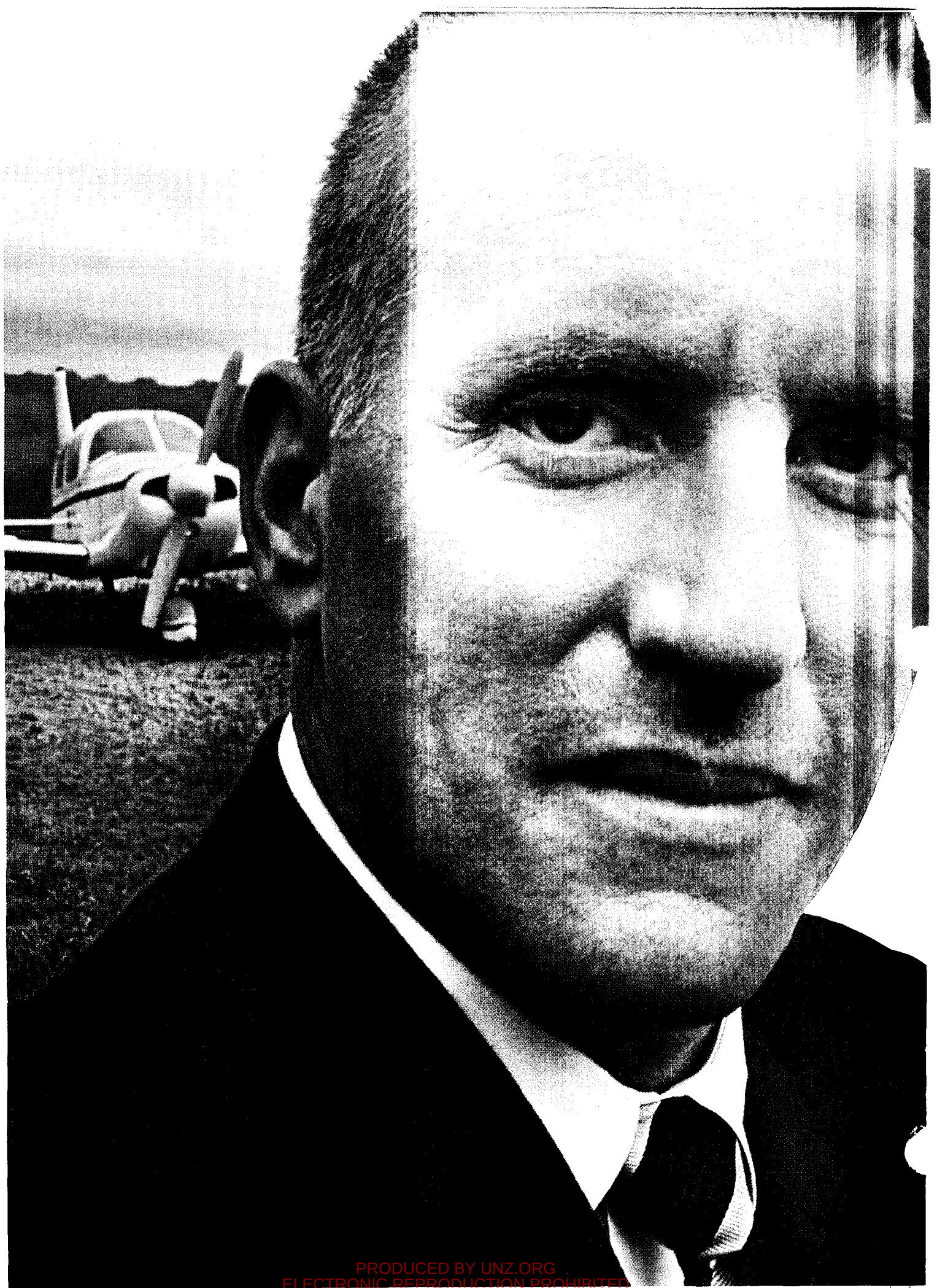
The Defense Department's consequent emphasis on the primacy of NATO strategy in policy-making on Greece happened to suit the prevailing mood at State. For some time the central tension in our European policy, which does receive ongoing attention on the seventh floor, has been over whether NATO is outmoded, a bar to détente with Eastern Europe, and should slowly be dismantled, or whether NATO still represents a farsighted policy and our best hope for promoting European unity and therefore must be maintained. At this point in time, with General de Gaulle shaking the NATO foundations, the latter viewpoint prevailed.

Thus there were not great policy debates about Greece. The policy tended just to happen, on an *ad hoc* basis, according to routine bureaucratic procedure. From time to time, there came from outside the normal chain of command strong suggestions that the United States take a firmer line against the junta, but only rarely did these suggestions permeate the structure. Occasionally, an issue even came to the President's desk. When such issues concern countries not normally subject to presidential or seventh-floor attention, they tend to get settled, rather quickly, by a presumption in favor of the position of the Secretary of State.

RESPONDING to Talbot's request for a strong denunciation of the coup, on April 23 Brewster and Battle had drafted at least a mild one regretting the action — "The U.S. by tradition is opposed to the change of democratic government by force" — but Rusk ruled against its issuance. His arguments were that this might impair future relations the United States might wish to have with the new regime, and there were political prisoners whose safety was of some concern to us. If the United States tried to unseat the junta, went the prevailing thought in Washington, the result might be fighting in the streets between royalist and rebellious armed forces; moreover, the junta might be secure enough to prevail, and then where would the United States be? Instead, Washington would work with the junta, trying to influence it to work with the King, to take steps to return to constitutional government, and to free the political prisoners. Therefore it



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would not be useful to suspend diplomatic relations.

As for arms (substantial economic assistance to Greece had ended in 1962), a major consideration of the moment was that Congress was upset already over the extent and use — as in the Indo-Pakistani and Arab-Israeli fighting — of U.S. military assistance. There was some concern, on the other hand, that if military aid to Greece were stopped, it might be difficult to get it resumed. In a split decision, shipments of tanks and jets were stopped, but light arms, including rifles and bullets, jeeps and trucks, and spare parts — what is known in policy circles as “the rinky-dink stuff” — continued to flow. The issue of the small arms was argued; the argument that cutting them off would be more difficult than it was worth prevailed.

“You end up dealing with what is in front of you,” said one of the policy-makers of the first week after the coup.

So for seven days the United States kept its silence, and on April 28, Secretary Rusk issued a statement weaker still than the one Brewster and Battle had drafted. It did not deplore the coup, and it made no mention of military aid, not even that some of it was being suspended, because, explains one official, “It would have been interpreted as an anti-coup move.” “We have followed closely the situation in Greece since the military take-over there last Friday,” said Rusk’s statement. “I am encouraged to see King Constantine . . . has called for an early return to parliamentary government. We are now awaiting concrete evidence that the new Greek government will make every effort to re-establish democratic institutions. . . . I am gratified that Greece will continue its strong support of NATO.” The colonels had wasted no time in pledging that. They showed less dispatch about satisfying the other wishes.

The Secretary’s statement also noted that Colonel Papadopoulos had said that the political prisoners rounded up during the coup would be set free “in a few days,” and that he trusted “this step will indeed be taken.” Andreas Papandreou was in prison. The pressure mounted quickly by his American friends, men with access to the highest levels of government, to prevent his assassination and secure his release probably has no recent equal. John Kenneth Galbraith from Harvard, Carl Kaysen from Princeton’s Institute for Advanced Studies, Walter Heller from the University of Minnesota, and others were calling the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary and Undersecretary of State. President Johnson commented that this was the one issue economists were agreed upon. In his White House redoubt, Walt Rostow received more than 200 letters from professors. This pressure was responsible in some degree for what restraint Wash-

ington displayed to the junta during the first days — the memoranda that went back and forth referred repeatedly to the fact that the academic community was upset — and also for our more-than-usual concern for political prisoners. But, in the case of the prisoners, there was also the fact that the junta had rounded up and imprisoned several of the State Department officials’ old friends from the right.

Perhaps it was his distaste for Andreas Papandreou, perhaps a weary reaction to the pressure from the academics, so many of them his tormentors on Vietnam, that led Dean Rusk to respond in effect to one domestic pleader for Papandreou that Andreas is no longer a professor of economics. He is now a politician, and it appears that he may have “a good deal to answer for.”

Eight months after the coup, about one half of the some 6000 prisoners whom the junta had rounded up were released. Andreas Papandreou, who had been kept in solitary confinement

all that time, was among them. Both the United States and the junta were interested in removing him from the Greek scene, and so he was released and allowed to leave the country.

Since the coup, the policy questions have arisen in terms of more cooperation with the junta. The policy-makers don’t put it that way, of course. They point to Washington’s “cool and correct” relations with the colonels, and our use of “carrots and sticks.” They also point out how cooperative the junta has been in serving our global needs.

Two months after the coup, the June war broke out in the Middle East. The Greek government permitted the United States overflights, base rights, and blanket, rather than ship-by-ship, use of Crete’s landing facilities for the Sixth Fleet. Thousands of American evacuees were landed in Athens, a fact which every Foreign Service Officer whose family has been abroad in a crisis appreciates. (Just why they had to be taken to Athens, as opposed to Rome or elsewhere, is not clear.)

Moreover, during the Middle East crisis, for the first time a Soviet fleet appeared in the Eastern Mediterranean. To the Navy, this made our entrée to Greek ports all the more essential, so that our sailors could have their “R and R” (rest and rehabilitation). Places of respite were diminishing: Arab ports were out, Spain does not like us to



land at Gibraltar, Italy limits our landing rights, and Turkish ports do not suffice. Early this year, the Navy pressed for a port call at Athens by the U.S.S. *Franklin D. Roosevelt* to re-establish the fact that we considered Greece a port of call. The visit turned into a friendly shipboard gathering which included the Greek defense minister, Ambassador Talbot, and Colonel Papadopoulos. Cameramen recorded the event, and the story was widely printed in Greek newspapers (under such headlines as "Warm Handshake in Front of Franklin Roosevelt," and "Greece Believes in NATO"). The State Department says that it was all a matter of mixed signals somewhere along the way.

In November, the junta again earned the State Department's gratitude. Turkey was about to invade Cyprus. The United States sent a special negotiator, Cyrus Vance, to cool the crisis and persuade both the Greeks and the Turks to withdraw some troops from the island (in the process, cementing the fact that the United States was dealing government-to-government with the junta). Both sides agreed. The State Department likes to point to this act of statesmanship by the junta, and compare it to the "irresponsibility" of the Papandreu. Aside from the fact that one operated under martial law and the other under an open parliamentary system, it is also possible that the junta was motivated by the fact that if the Turks had invaded, the Greeks would have been overwhelmed.



One of the grounds on which the United States explained its continuing relationship with the junta was the technical one that our diplomatic accreditation was to the King, and since the King dealt with the junta, so did we. Moreover, we were doing what we could to work things out between the two. Therefore, there was a problem when, on December 13, the King decided to overthrow the junta. The United States knew that he had been mulling the action for some time, but officials say that the King did not inform Talbot of his decision to move until that very day. At that point he asked for our help. Talbot relayed the request and indicated that he was giving some thought to going north with the King, our last hope for Greece.

Within the U.S. government, the hope was that the King would succeed, and the betting was that he would — most of the troops were in the north and

had not been with the junta. The United States did not, however, want to be caught on the wrong side in case he failed. Help was refused, and Talbot stayed in Athens. As it turned out, Constantine's coup may set some sort of record for incompetence, and within twenty-four hours he and his family were on their way to safety in Rome. ("I find it insulting," one State Department official complained, "that the United States is accused of being associated with such a disorganized coup.") When the King left the country, our basis for dealing with the regime had disappeared, and for a few weeks Washington suspended normal diplomatic contacts. But later, because, it is said, the junta and the King were negotiating for the King's return to Greece, we resumed our dealings — albeit "cool and correct" — with the colonels.

"The purpose of our policy," said one high State Department official, "has been to influence these people to move in the direction of constitutional government, and it has had that effect." Thus the policy-makers are quite pleased to point out that in March the junta issued a draft constitution. The officials must have been counting on nobody's reading it, however ("the lawyers are studying it," was the reply of one whom I asked about it), for the draft constitution was a document straight out of *Catch-22*. "The press is free and exercises a social mission, that entails obligations . . . Confiscation is permitted . . . when it insults the Christian religion, insults the person of the King, the King's parents, the Queen, the crown prince, their children and wives, insults the honor and reputation of individuals holding public office or having held public office. . . ." And so on. The constitution was to be freely discussed ("the people are writing the articles of the constitution"), under martial law. The expectation was that a revised version would be issued — there was no way for it to go but up — showing the regime's receptivity to public opinion. A referendum on the constitution has been set for early September, but Colonel Papadopoulos has declined to set dates for the formation of political parties or for parliamentary elections. On the anniversary of the coup, one of the newspapers closest to the regime wrote that "the fingers of one hand are not enough to count the number of years it needs to accomplish its aims."

The method by which the United States achieved this policy success is one that State Department policy-makers talk about quite a bit: the use of "carrots and sticks." The fact is, however, that diplomats usually prefer offering carrots to wielding sticks. And so by July, 1967, the embassy, having adjusted, as embassies do, to the new circumstances, suggested a gradual resumption of the remaining military aid. Having continued diplomatic con-

tacts, having continued to ship small arms, having done nothing to discourage private investment, the United States had made the remaining weapons — minesweepers, tanks, jets — the last symbol of our attitude of reserve toward the junta. Nevertheless, the question did not cause much debate within the government. The embassy suggestion was approved by the State Department in July and forwarded to the White House. President Johnson concurred, provided that private soundings indicated that Congress would not object.

The soundings were not taken, however, as other planned soundings over the following year on resuming the aid were not, because each time they were about to take place, the junta made some particularly embarrassing move. For the anniversary of the coup, for instance, they put aged George Papandreou and Panayotis Kanellopoulos, the rightist prime minister at the time of the coup, under house arrest. (Around the State Department, this is seen as evidence of the colonels' "poor sense of public relations," as was the fact that only half of the political prisoners were released after eight months.) It was a bit awkward to push for increased arms aid under such circumstances, and it was important not to endanger further the entire controversial arms program by arousing Congress over Greece.

Arms aid to the junta would be increased, however, as soon as the congressional thicket could be negotiated. One State Department official explained (in the same interview) that this should be done because (a) this would be the way to nudge the junta toward a constitutional government and (b) the junta had no intention of stepping aside for some five years and we had better get along with them as best we could. The colonels have also passed along the word, persuasive to some of the policy-makers, that we had best help them further in order to offset the neutralist — the words "Nasserite" and "Gaullist" are used — inclinations of some of the younger officers associated with them.

The major reason for the planned resumption of arms aid, however, lay in the comparative strengths of the pressures brought to bear in Washington. The men who run the military assistance program were anxious to commit the remaining weapons for Greece which had been programmed for the past fiscal year, so that they could justify to Congress their request for still more weapons for Greece — close to \$70 million worth of them — over the next fiscal year. The arms resumption was also vigorously championed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and by the CIA, anxious to retain its base in Greece. Battle was said to have developed some doubts, but when State is only doubtful and the Pentagon and the CIA are en-

thusiastic, State loses, unless someone decides to take the fight to the White House.

The general view of those responsible for our Greek policy is that it has all worked out for the best. "They [the colonels] haven't done too badly," said one. "They've made some improvements on the Greek scene. They have brought into the government a sense of austerity and welcome probity, I would say. Although they are inept economically, they haven't brought about disaster. They do lack important things, obviously. They lack constitutionality, legality, experience, and a sense of public relations. But from their point of view, why should they step down?" Another suggested that the way to look at the situation was that order had been restored, Andreas Papandreou and the King, the two most exacerbating factors in Greek politics, were out of the country, and a constitution was on the way.

Despite these ideal circumstances, Washington has not run out of ideas about how to help Greece. The current thinking is that the thing to do is to nudge the colonels into inviting Karamanlis to return from Paris to head the government. Andreas Papandreou and others have suggested a coalition of center and right, and perhaps the United States would accept this, but it is assumed that the right is still the best hope for order in Greece. The embassy has reported, anyway, and it is the accepted wisdom among the policy-makers — despite evidence that the Americans in Greece have chronically and wishfully underrated the Papandreous' popularity — that Andreas Papandreou's popularity in Greece has plummeted to zero, and that his father's is down to 10 or 20 percent. It is also argued that the Greek people are "apathetic," even relieved to have been saved from the politicians, and, lo, the threat of leftist violence, which we and the right have been fearing and guarding against these many years, has seemingly disappeared.

Others do not think it has, and argue that the longer the colonels stay in power, the more likely it is to grow. It does not strain the imagination to consider, if there were Communist insurgency against a military government we have been arming, which side the United States might be on. The policy-makers assume that the Greeks have had their fill of civil war, but the lesson others draw from the 1930s and 1940s is that Greece has a history of violence in the face of repressive regimes. Yet even if the worst — "another Vietnam," for example — does not come to pass, there are other grounds for being disturbed about our Greek policy.

Much of foreign policy, one official says soothingly, is simply "buying time." In the Greek case, another way of putting that might be "mortgaging the future."

JOE BANANAS *by Sam Toperoff*

THE dream of sailors is to own a ship. For horse players the ultimate dream is to own a horse. My dream began to become a plan, but the plan died aborting when I came to know Joe Bananas (Bonano was his real name), a local restaurateur — Italian cuisine — who bought and raced as pathetic a two-year-old filly as ever planted a hoof in the loam of a New York State racetrack.

The bar in Joe's place was a sports bar, a place where every sport — curling and tossing the caber included — could be discussed with every appearance of intelligence. Often on a Friday night, I'd sit with a friend at the bar in Joe's place, eating Joe's sausage pizza, drinking Joe's cold beer, and discussing sports with every appearance of intelligence. Simply stated, Joe was a "sports nut"; he knew boxing very well and horse racing fairly well. He had fought a bit as a kid in Brooklyn at one hundred and twelve pounds: now he was a heavyweight restaurateur with a bum knee and a perfectly shaved head.

"I'm looking for a horse," Joe announced at the bar one snowy night in '63.

"I know a very sound trotter you could claim for thirty-five hundred, and he's racing fit," said my friend Richie, a curmudgeon who preferred standardbreds.

"A trotter? They ain't horses," Joe said, as though he were dismissing a drunk. "I want a *thoroughbred*." The word was uttered with reverence. "Who needs a *trotter*?" — he spit the word roughly — "I want a real *thoroughbred*." The word now became almost a love song. "*Trotters* are pigs; but a *thoroughbred* . . ." His dark face blanched, and he kissed the tips of his fingers and tossed away a kiss.

"A thoroughbred is too much of an investment," said the trot fancier coldly.

"You know me, Richie," answered Joe; "if I go, I go first-class. You know what I mean?"

And that was an end to it until the fall of '64. We were at the far end of the bar, the dark, private end. Richie and I talked seriously about pooling our miserable bankrolls and putting a down pay-

ment on either a bar or a horse. The bar seemed a growth business beyond any doubt. We'd often talked about such investments, fairly secure that they'd never materialize. Richie, for example, had talked for five years about claiming a trotter.

Then I noticed, hanging from a wall hook, a tiny gray silk shirt. I picked it off. Under it was a tiny gray silk cap. For laughs, and since there was no lampshade handy, I stuck the cap on the top of my head. "Hey, Joe, who do these belong to, a Confederate midget?"

"They're mine," Joe called back from the bright end of the bar without even turning around.

Then I realized. "Hey, they're silks. Jockey silks!"

Joe, who had been busy with other customers and other thoughts, came alive now that I'd found his treasure.

"Where'd you get them?" I asked.

"Where do you think? I bought them. Fifty bucks." He hesitated and tried desperately to throw the next line away. He failed miserably: "I bought the horse that goes under them too. A *thoroughbred*, Richie."

So Joe Bananas had a thoroughbred, Para Bola, by Mona Star out of Out Strip. I was thrilled. I began describing Joe to my friends as a close friend of mine who had racehorses. I stopped in to see him as often as I could. Progress was slow. He'd found a trainer, a man who had marginal successes over a number of years at various tracks, some of those marginal, too. Joe's trainer's greatest success seemed to be that he continued in the business of training horses.

On January 1, 1965, Para Bola and every other racehorse in this country became a year older. In the early spring the horse was schooled on a half-mile track in Westbury; she was taught to tolerate the presence of other horses, to respond to a rider, to change leads around a turn, and to keep to a straight path. These things Para Bola learned to do, with neither ease nor remarkable success.

Joe Bananas finally got his owner's license. Not without some trouble though. "They're very care-

ful," Joe explained. "I apply, but I don't hear nothing for a long time. Then one night this guy walks in. You can tell right away he's a cop — a fed maybe. But I'm not out here. I'm in the kitchen making pizza dough. My father-in-law, he don't know what to do, but he sends the guy back to the kitchen. Turns out the guy's an investigator for the New York Racing Association. He shows me a pile of credentials. So we sit at a table in the back. I'm covered with flour from making the pizzas. And he tells me that there's a K.B. in Corona with the exact same name as mine. Another one yet, as if I ain't got enough trouble. So I show him that I run a respectable place. That I never had committed a crime of any kind, because I hadn't." Joe was passionate in the retelling.

I interrupted: "Joe, Joe, wait a second. What's a K.B.?"

"Known Bookmaker. So I tried to show the guy I was clean. He said he could see that, but that he was just checking; it was his job. They checked everyone who applied for a license. I asked him if he wanted a drink. He said absolutely not. Then he filled out a report on me. And I got my license the next week." He showed it to me proudly. Joe Bananas, Ogden Phipps, and Joan Whitney Payson were now of a kind. "It's amazing. They check out everyone. You've got to be absolutely clean to race a horse in this state." The triumph of passing the investigation welled up in Joe and seemed to make racing and trying to win something with his horse an afterthought. Then he showed me his membership card in the Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association. He positively beamed.

"How's the horse?" I asked rudely.

"Oh, her. She's had a workout — forty seconds breezing."

"That's not bad for that training track," I consoled.

"What training track? It was on the *main track at Belmont*. She's stabled at Belmont now." Joe was proud; Kelso was stabled there too. "They say she was picking up other horses toward the end of her workout. Really wanted to run, they say. Looks like she can go a distance. Besides, it was her first workout. She probably felt strange. They're delicate mechanisms, those thoroughbreds. I'll show you how delicate." He went over to his drawer and opened it with difficulty. It overflowed with training bills. "Floating [grinding] the horse's teeth — twelve dollars. Shots for something I can't

even make out — twenty dollars. Special bit — ten dollars . . ."

"When's the horse going to start?"

Joe's eyes narrowed to buttonholes. "I wish I knew; I just wish to hell I knew. They're schooling her from the gate now. She went in Tuesday morning with three or four other horses. Sat quiet in the gate. The bell rang. The doors popped open. The other horses broke out. Para sat." Joe imitated his frightened charger. He writhed. His bald head fell back, round eyes wide and blank. He twitched a shoulder. Very funny. "I'm laughing, but I'm crying," Joe said. "Every day that horse doesn't start, it costs me twenty dollars. But they tell me she may get the hang of the gate just like that"; he snapped his wet fingers crisply. "Yeah. They really protect the bettors. The Racing Association won't let you put a horse in a race who can't leave from the gate. Anyway, if she learns to break, we'll give her a couple of good workouts and then get her entered in a race. The sooner, the better."

"You can't rush her, Joe."

"No, not rush her, but get her in a race as soon as possible. We want to make our claim."

"What's the hurry?"

"What's the hurry? What's the hurry?" Joe was invoking the oldest kids' trick in the world — repeating the question in order to stall around until an answer came. "You've got to have a horse in one of the races at the meeting in order to make a claim during that meeting. So if we don't make a claim this spring, we'll have to wait until they come back from Saratoga. Got to get Para in a race. I ain't shipping her up to Saratoga. Don't care if she's last by twenty lengths. Just get her in a race. Of course" — he smiled sideways — "that little filly of mine got a lot of run in her. I figured her at least in the money." He secretly dreamed Para Bola a champion. "I really think she'll come in the money, but it doesn't really matter. All those two-year-olds are green as hell — and some of them are real pigs."

"Be realistic, Joe; she hasn't even learned to break out of the gate yet."

"Realistic? Why she's got more heart in her than —" He couldn't think of an honest comparison. "Audie Murphy," he said finally.

"When does your trainer think you'll be able to get her into a race?"

"He won't say. Frankly, I'm not too sure about that guy. He's one of those quiet, patient types. Never says nothing but 'Be patient, be patient.'"

"Well, he must know what he's doing. I mean, after all, he is the trainer. And these young horses are very delicate creatures. He's probably right. What the hell are you paying him for anyway if you won't listen to him?"

Sam Toperoff is a racing buff who studies the track, writes poems, and is the author of ALL THE ADVANTAGES and of a forthcoming book on the lore and lure of the turf.

"I'm not so sure. I was talking to another trainer about Para, and he says —"

"Joe! That's unethical. When one man has your horse, you're not even supposed to look at another trainer!"

"Oh, come on. Doctors tell you to get another opinion, don't they?" He had me there. Trainers, by and large, were a bit more ethical than doctors. "What did this other guy say?"

"He didn't say anything specific about my horse, but he did say that my trainer is much too careful — *overcareful*, he said. Meanwhile, the bills are piling up, and Para hasn't even learned to break yet." He went away and washed a few beer glasses. He returned to punctuate his thoughts. "Sure I'm getting impatient — because I know my horse has got it *here!*" He clamped his fist over his own abundant heart.

Two weeks passed, and when I inquired about Para, Joe told me she still hadn't broken. "She's got a mental block," he said. A week later the block still hadn't been lifted. "Lookit," he pleaded, "you know a lot about horses." I slipped on some humility. "Suppose you come out with me to watch her work tomorrow morning. Tell me what you think. If he's training her right."

I thought I'd better not come between an owner and his trainer. "No, no. I really don't think I ought to."

"Well, I'm gonna go, and I'd better like what I see tomorrow."

I got the story of what happened at the track from two different sources, and it was essentially the same in each telling. Joe got to the barn area very early. Dawn had not quite stretched her finger-rays over Belmont Park. Joe had walked down the shedrow, past the stalls. Most of the horses were at attention at their feed bags. He stopped at a stall where a horse was over on his side. Completely still. A solitary fly buzzed around his eyes. Then another came and buzzed his posterior. The nameplate on the stall read Croquet King, and his trainer was the gentleman to whom Joe had gone for "another opinion." Croquet King was an Irish horse that had run creditably in claimers in this country, but the trainer was looking forward to bigger things on grass in June and July. Joe gave a shrill whistle and stamped; the flies reacted, but the horse didn't. He shouted: "C'mon King. Up boy. C'mon boy." Nothing. So he let it be.

Joe moved to Para Bola's stall. She recognized him immediately, and both of them perked up. He caressed her. She tried to bite his hand. He gave her some sugar. She took it and then tried to bite his hand. At moments like these Para Bola

was more than Joe's means to claiming a winner. She was a winner — the two-year-old filly champion. Joe was playing with his dream horse when his trainer ambled into the barn. He was a man who thought that owners ought to put up the money and stay away from the horses. He winced at Joe's display.

Joe and his trainer greeted each other tentatively. Both sensed the importance of the day, the need for a resolution.

"She gets another shot out of the gate today," the trainer drawled.

"She'd better come out," Joe said, feeding Para Bola his knuckle.

"She'll come out when she comes out. Nothin' kin hurry that."

Joe sensed that his ultimatum had been understood, so he could afford to change the subject: "What's wrong with Croquet King down there? He's out like a light."

"Nothin' wrong. He just a very sound sleeper is all. Whyn't you go down an' wake 'im up." It cannot be absolutely determined precisely how ironic this simple man was, but the evidence suggesting strong irony is considerable. Joe went back to Croquet King's stall and blew six shrill whistles at the horse. Other horses bolted and stomped and whinnied.

"He's a sound sleeper. Get closer," came the professional advice from the end of the barn.

Joe entered the stall and blew shrilly into the dormant ear.

"You've got to hit 'im," the advice curled in through the door.

Joe slapped the horse's neck while making a clucking with his mouth. The two flies flew out of the stall, but the horse didn't move.

Para Bola was set for a light gallop and then schooling from the gate. She was saddled and ready to take the track, so Joe returned to his first love. Para Bola was a bit frisky, but she warmed up nicely. She went to school in the starting gate with four other two-year-olds. She had to be pushed in by three assistant starters. Another kept her head straight. The gate opened, and Para Bola flew out in running stride. The boy was under orders to work her if she broke, and surprised though he was, he did — five furlongs in a minute and five seconds. Poor time, but better than Croquet King would ever run. He'd been dead since about 1 A.M. Joe's trainer must have peeked in and seen the indubitable marks. Croquet King's trainer was now standing thunderstruck over the carcass. Joe Bananas had been had, but he didn't seem to mind — his horse had broken from the starting gate.

For the trainer of Croquet King there were rounds of commiseration from other trainers, the

owners, the exercise boys, the grooms — all were secretly pleased that they hadn't lost their own horses. The explanations were sensible: King had bled from the mouth after his last race; had gone off his feed; great temperature fluctuations. Everyone around the track is tense and edgy when a horse dies. The tenderness a horse engenders in these hard-bitten people is impossible to discover from the outside, but the racehorse is loved by them — loved in the way that a man loves his own pulse, a love usually unannounced.

Para Bola broke well twice the following week and finally graduated from gate school. However, getting her in a race was another story. In late May she "bucked a shin." This is a common ailment among young horses, roughly equivalent to "shin splints" in human athletes. A bucked shin is an inflammation and extreme tenderness in front of the cannon bone, the upper "shin" of a horse's leg. Trainers expect bucked shins and pray that their young horses buck both shins at the same time, since each separate ailment takes a horse out of training for about a month. Para Bola bucked her left shin and was out six weeks. She was slowly coming back when she bucked the right shin.

"Joe," I asked, "when is that horse of yours going to race?"

"Takes time. Takes time. You can't rush these things. My man knows what he's doing."

"Now you're talking like a horse owner, Joe."

"Except." Joe added, "I told him to do what he could for the horse — nature is the best healer and all that — but I told him that horse had better run before they move up to Saratoga. I mean there's

a limit even to my patience. And, what the hell is Bute anyway?"

"What's what?"

"Bute. Bute. Here's a bill from the vet." He, of course, produced it from the stuffed drawer. "Ten cc. Bute — forty-five dollars. What the hell is Bute?"

"You've got me there, Joe. I never heard of it."

"I thought you were supposed to know your way around a racetrack, and you don't even know Bute?" Joe was cranky.

"I'm not a doctor, Joe," I bit back mildly.

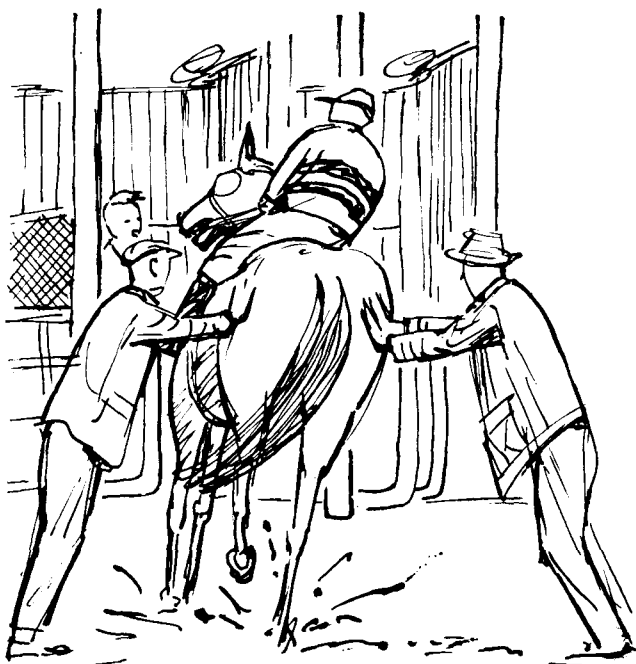
Late in July I spoke to Joe again about his dream. "When's that horse of yours going to race, Joe?"

"Next week," came his crisp reply. He was certainly not exultant. The fact was an anticlimax. "You know," he continued after missing a beat, "how much it costs to just get a horse used to the paddock and a crowd?" I must have gone blank because he explained. "You can't take a young horse and just put him cold in front of all those people; he's liable to go nuts. So you van him over to Aqueduct during the day, saddle him, and walk him around in the ring. Gets him used to the people, the other horses, the excitement, you know." It made perfect sense. I must have nodded. Joe said, "You know what that costs?" I must have shaken my head. "Thirty-five bucks," Joe said.

"Now you know why it's called the sport of kings, Joe." Joe didn't laugh.

But the horse didn't start, and August came and they shipped her up to Saratoga. August went by, and they shipped her back to New York, and still the punters had been deprived of Para Bola. It's ironic that in a sport devoted to speed, patience is a prime virtue. A jockey may sit on a horse's back for two minutes and earn 10 percent of a hundred-thousand-dollar purse, but that same horse must be properly "cooled out" for nearly an hour afterward, or he may never earn another penny.

Joe pressured, but the trainer withstood every attempt. Finally, in September Para Bola was entered. The race, a filly two-year-old claimer, was flooded with other entries. Para didn't get to start the race because there were simply too many entries. "She got stars for entering, though," Joe explained. "Every time we enter her she gets stars. Finally, she'll have enough stars so that they got to let her run. All those horses had more stars than she did, that's how come they got in." I wondered if King Ranch or the Wheatly Stable ever had to worry about "stars" for their two-year-olds. I assumed they did and told that to Joe. "Oh, yeah," he said, "it's all on the up-and-up. It's the same for everyone. Ogden Phipps is the same as me." I wanted to say that Phipps's fillies couldn't possibly work five furlongs in a minute and five, but it would have been too cruel.



She's going," Joe blurted.

"Great! When?"

"Tomorrow. Fourth race."

"Great! I'll be there."

"She's fifteen-to-one on the morning line. She'll go off something like twenty- or thirty-to-one, I'll bet. And, listen" — he leaned over the bar and whispered sincerely — "it's not impossible. Know what I mean?"

"Of course it's not. She could finish in the money."

"What 'in the money'?" Joe's eyes were piercing black beans. "She could" — he checked his rising voice level and looked around — "win it all." I tried to get him to be a lot more realistic. "She could, she could," he fired quickly. "It's a race, and you've been around horse racing long enough to know that anything can happen."

"Yes," I agreed, "But —"

"So," he said conclusively. Then he asked me if I wanted to stop by the stable at Belmont with him in the morning on the way out to the track. "For luck," he said proudly. I'd never actually seen his horse, and he'd like my opinion. Joe was, as always, a remarkable combination of intelligence, credulity, and tenderness. Of course I'd take a look at Para Bola.

She was a *petit* thing, only about fifteen hands and six hundred pounds. Her head was well shaped and intelligent; her color ranged from a misty brown to a dark, rich mocha. Her coat was fine, and she was obviously in good health. Even though she was small, I didn't feel obliged to pet or feed her the lump of sugar Joe offered me; her teeth snapped at anything that moved.

"How do you like her?" Joe asked almost rhetorically.

"Fine. She's a really fine young filly," I said.

"Then go ahead and feed her," he pressed.

"No. I'd rather not."

"'Fraid? Nothing to be afraid of. Watch." And Joe did a remarkable thing. He walked under Para's neck and placed his own shaved head right under her mouth, which she opened as wide as she could. She bit! Her teeth slid along the surface and clicked shut. Again she opened her mouth and tried to bite the ripe sphere. Like a small child, Para teethered on the human nub. She twisted her head to get a better toothhold. It had no corners. Para munched until she had enough. Joe dabbed his wet head with a handkerchief. Ogden Phipps probably didn't have that sort of relationship with his horses.

Joe bought me breakfast. When Joe offers to buy, the easiest alternative is acceptance. He questioned me about Para's chances. The *Telegraph* was no help here. I certainly didn't want to fan Joe's natural enthusiasm. It was obvious that what

had started out as a business venture for him had become an affair of the heart. You can't handicap those things. I wanted Para to do well for Joe's sake. Who knows? Maybe she could come in in the money. After all, workouts aren't races. There are horses who run their races in the morning; and others who can't do a thing right in a workout win in the afternoon. It's happened. And if she can get in the money, how much more does it take to win? On such logic hopes become fantasies.

We separated, Joe and I; he went to pick up his wife and some relatives, his partners and their wives and their relatives. I saw them in the clubhouse before the race; they bubbled and laughed and snuck little looks at themselves. The horses arrived saddled from beneath the stands. Among them, wearing a large white "three" on a black saddlecloth, was the playful teether of the morning. Now her eyes rolled in her head and her ears twitched. She seemed to be sweating a bit at the kidney — an unhappy sign. Her tail had been braided — I wondered what that had cost Joe. Joe was very proud and excited. He had been graced with a beautiful autumn day. Then the jockeys arrived from the depths of the stands. Number three's jockey wore the tiny gray outfit I'd discovered hanging on the wall in Joe's place almost a year earlier. A year! The track program described it as "blue, silver star, silver sleeves, two blue hoops, silver cap, blue tassel." The alchemy of this day had turned gray to silver; it would turn silver back to gray again. The jockey, an undistinguished young man who had done well when he rode with an apprentice allowance two years before, listened to a few terse words from the monosyllabic trainer and mounted the horse.

I thought the "three" post position would hurt Para Bola, since she might not break well from the gate. The field was large (fifteen horses) and unwieldy (they were indeed very "green"), so a horse that didn't get off well would have trouble picking her way through the field. Because it was late in the season, they were asked to run six furlongs instead of the five furlongs they run in the spring; this extra furlong might help Para Bola. I saw Joe at the fifty-dollar window, and he was there for quite a while. I bet Para Bola two dollars across the board. A token gesture.

Para didn't get off well and finished ten seconds off the track record, about twenty-five lengths behind the winner. I felt very sorry for Joe and wanted to say something, but Para's performance had made words impossible.

A week later the scene was replayed exactly, although the day was not so nice. This time, however, Para trailed only eleven other horses. It was a twelve-horse field. I didn't bother Joe with stupid commiseration. I gave the matter five

winter months to sink to forgetfulness. Then, in March, I saw the name "Para Bola" listed in a cheap claiming race up at Lincoln Downs. Someone must have put some sense in Joe's head. The purses in New England were smaller, but the competition was more realistic for Joe's horse. He had obviously shipped up to Rhode Island where he wouldn't have to compete with some of the best stock in the country.

I couldn't find the result of Para's race in the newspapers, so I had to buy a *Telegraph*. Para was a constant reminder of the adage You have to walk before you can run — she finished seventh, half a length ahead of the last horse. I used her moral victory as an excuse to renew the sympathetic bond between Joe and me.

A chilly afternoon in April. Joe was at the bar reading *Ring* magazine. He came alive when he saw me, but I took the play right away from him. "Joe, that's a smart thing you did, shipping up to Rhode Island. The horse is in her class up there. She'll be in the money when the weather warms up. And that's the place to make your claim too. I hear there's a gentlemen's agreement up there — I don't claim your horse, you don't claim mine; you know, that sort of thing. That's the place to claim all right. They'll hate you when you take something good away from them, but so what! So you're not a gentleman, big deal. And if you get something really good, you can ship him to New York, and if they want him back they'll have to

come and get him — at New York prices! Yeah, that's a smart move, Joe, shipping up there. A smart move; I'm proud of you."

Halfway through my pep talk Joe turned back to *Ring* magazine. When I finished, he looked up again. "I sold her. I don't own Para no more." The bill for the Bute stuck out of the drawer behind him. Then he continued: "No, it wasn't no good. Cost too damn much to run her here. Too much. Yet this is the only place to do it, New York I mean. If you can't cut it here, then you just can't cut it. You know what I mean?" Joe was sadder but wiser — but sadder.

I nodded agreement. Joe drew me a beer.

"It was a wild, crazy dream. So I gambled and lost. But a man's got to have a dream. Right?"

"You think anyone can beat Clay?" he asked, stunning me with his abrupt change of mood and subject. I must have blinked. He expanded: "Cassius Clay. Do you think there's anybody around who can beat him?"

"No," I said.

"Yes, there is," Joe corrected me. "But no one knows who he is yet. He may not even know it himself. But somewhere there's a kid coming up who can beat Cassius Clay."

I shook my head.

"I'm looking to buy a fighter. You don't know any, do you?"

"How would I know a fighter, Joe?"

"Yeah, me and Chick are looking for a fighter —"

A PLEASING FRAGRANCE

BY JOHN L'HEUREUX

He was crowing
on the rooftop
of his sanctity

when the house burned
down. Crazy old cock
larger than death

he thought
before the conflagration.

It *was* a fire, though,

noise and apparatus
and he up there
coining phrases

with his tail in flames.
He would have laughed
to see himself.

Maybe he did laugh.
Maybe that was why
he crowed,

because he knew
it was preposterous
and wanted to go out

the way he lived.
And so he's gone,
poor roasted soul,

in blazing glory.
He made, despite himself,
a good holocaust.

TWO IN THE BUSH

A story by Paul Theroux

THE grocery store on Uhuru Avenue (formerly Queensway) was owned by Sam Fong, a Chinese immigrant. They called him an immigrant; actually he had lived in East Africa longer than the Prime Minister, who was an African. But to be one Chinaman in a country of seven million Africans is not easy: you stand out; the East cannot save you; you remain a visible immigrant all your born days, and so do your children, and so do theirs.

On the window of the store, in white irregular letters, was written "Friend Frocery Pop in Please for Better Price Anywhere in Africa." Some Swahili progress slogans had been written on the window but were now scratched out. Four years after independence Sam Fong discovered that the less said about progress the better. The slogans antagonized his customers and often got him into ideological hot water. Take "One Man, One Vote" (a stick figure with a ballot between its fingers illustrated this slogan). Many Africans came into the grocery store and said, "Big words, big vote. Where is this thing vote? You tell me."

"Like the Holy Spirit" — Fong was a Catholic — "the vote is everywhere. But you can't see it, that's all," said Fong, grinning, and thinking how much better the sentence would have sounded in Chinese than Swahili.

"These bloody-fool politicians," the Africans would answer. "There is no freedom, just their fat asses in big cars forever, finish, that's all. Give me the British anyday. At least they say what they mean. If they think you bloody baboon, they say straight out, 'I think you African chap are bloody baboon.' British are too honest, you know. That why everyone like them *kabisa*, much-much. But these African politicians are bloody sheet."

"Be patient," Fong would say. This he had been saying nearly every day of his thirty-five years in East Africa. When he realized that the progress slogans upset his African customers, he scratched them off the window.

In spite of the fact that many of Fong's white customers might say (and often did say), "The Chinese are born grocers," Sam Fong was not a

born grocer. It should have been clear to anyone standing in the grocery store that Fong's real genius was in carpentry: the hardwood shelves covered every wall from floor to ceiling; bins, vats, counters, stools — all mortised and tenoned (not a nail in the place) — were everywhere, unbreakable, sturdy, hard, with chamfered edges and smooth surfaces. But on the formidable expanse of shelves were only a few cans, a few lonely packages of tea and hair straightener and skin lightener. On the smooth counter, as big as the Congo, was a tin receptacle containing stale bread and a few old cream buns; in the bins some onions were starting to shoot green stalks into each other, in the vats maybe a dozen handfuls of rice. Speaking plainly, there were no groceries in the grocery store. The only piece of grocery-store furniture that appeared to be fulfilling its design and justifying its labor was the stool Sam Fong's wife, Soo, sat on, week after week, smiling at the empty shelves beyond.

Sam Fong *had* been a carpenter. He had been a foreman in the carpentry shop of the Ministry of Works when East Africa was a British protectorate. Shortly after independence, an Englishman came up to Fong and asked, "In point of fact, I want you to tell me straight out, Fong, who you would say is the keenest chap in the workshop. I don't want a dog's body, you understand." The Englishman bared his teeth. "I want someone terribly keen."

Sam Fong thought a moment and then pointed to Mohinder Singh, chief *fundi* of the workshop; Singh was gnawing a dowel that he found too large for a hole.

"No, no, not a *Muhindi*," said the Englishman. "I want a native, an African chap, you see? A black one."

"Take anyone," said Fong.

"Are they all that keen?"

"No. All the same. Useless buggers," said Fong in Swahili. "Buggers" he said in English.

"I'm afraid I can't agree with you there, Fong. No, sir, I just can't. You give these people half a chance, and there's no telling what will happen.

Oh, I know, we're not in charge anymore, but that's hard cheese; we'll just have to live with it. Now for goodness sake, Fong, point me out a keen chap. I'm a busy man."

Fong shrugged in the direction of an African man in rags sawing a board. The man sawed very quickly with one hand and picked his teeth with the other hand. The board was held firm by the man's toes, which curled around the edges and prevented it from moving. "Keen chep," said Fong, "like the rest of them." These words were Fong's undoing.

The next day the Englishman appeared again and handed the African an envelope. The African, who was working on his back under a table at the time, glanced over and took the envelope firmly between the large and second toe of his right foot.

Sam Fong looked on in horror. He half expected the African to rip open the envelope with his toes and hold up the letter with his left foot for all to see. The African did not do this. Instead, he just raised his right foot a few inches, holding the envelope above the sawdust, the wood shavings and spittings, and continued drilling the hole under the table. Neither the Englishman nor Sam Fong nor the envelope moved for a full five minutes. The African put down his drill and moved out from under the large table sideways, like a crab. He passed the envelope from his foot to his left hand, and squatting on the floor, opened it. He looked at the Englishman.

The Englishman's face brightened and twisted itself into a smile so large that it was almost not a smile; the Englishman's eyes popped, and he clasped his hands behind his back and rocked on his heels. He turned his face to Sam Fong and continued rocking and grinning, although Fong remained horror-struck, yellow, his eyes and mouth only slits in a lineless face.

The African looked bewildered, almost harmed. He walked up to the Englishman, and said softly, "I am going to England."

"You deserve it, son," said the Englishman, bouncing once on his toes. "You're a keen chap."

The African went over to Sam Fong. "I am going to England," he said.

"May your misbegotten children die diseased in a whorehouse there. I hope you never come back," said Sam Fong in Chinese. He grinned, and then uttered a Swahili proverb.

The small barefoot African and the large English-

man, bags under his eyes, bags in his trousers, his paunch-tightened shirt bursting over his belt, left the workshop arm in arm and walked down the driveway to a waiting Mercedes with Department of Technical Assistance written on the door. Before the Englishman got into the car, he stopped, looked up the driveway to Sam Fong, winked, and erected his thumb in what he intended as a gesture of mutual triumph. Sam Fong raised a ripe middle finger to the man, something he had not done since he was a very young boy in Central China.

Sam Fong's curse was not as powerful as the will of the Department of Technical Assistance. The African came back six months later. He had gone on a carpentry course in Birmingham where he found out about drill presses, steam drills, and table saws that could do the work of ten men. If Fong had been in the habit of going to the movies, he might have seen in *News From Britain* the African he cursed being shown around the Birmingham Technical School by a man in a white smock. Looking on were two Nigerians, a Zambian, a Ghanaian in a robe, a Sudanese in a fez, and a Kenyan in a three-piece suit carrying a fly whisk, which he flicked at giant whirring machines. Sam Fong's keen chap was wearing real clothes and even a pair of shoes, and later in the film operated a drill press while the six Africans and twenty white Birmingham Tech students applauded and waved into the camera. At the end of the film, while the narrator said, "But it's not all work and no play for these keen carpenters," the Africans were riding a red double-decker bus, eating a meal of fish and chips topped off with large helpings of jellied eels, being shown what looked like a museum by a bald man with a thick gold chain around his neck, and ("there was lots of merriment in store for these keen craftsmen in wood") dancing with large-chinned and flat-chested English girls from "right across the highroad at Birmingham Domestic Science College, where five Zanzibaris will finish their course this year."

When Mohinder Singh came to work the next morning and described *News From Britain* to Sam Fong ("dancing with a *Mzungu* girl and goodness knows what"), Sam Fong wept. His tears were scarcely dry when the African showed up and announced, with an official letter of appointment as proof, that he was foreman. Fong was given a drill. He handed his clipboard and pencil to the African, and cursing in Chinese, took his place under the half-made furniture on his back, "like a whore in Shanghai," he reflected.

The African now wore suits, bought a motorcycle and a fountain pen, and carried a humming transistor radio with him wherever he went; he showed up to work late and drunk, called the other Africans bloody baboons and useless natives, and

An author and teacher still in his twenties, Mr. Theroux is at present lecturer in English at Makerere University in Uganda. His first novel appeared last year, and Houghton Mifflin will publish his second, FONG AND THE INDIANS, next month.

began saying to Sam Fong, "Carry on then . . . I'll leave you to get on with it . . . pull your finger out . . . belt up or I'll sack you off . . ." One day, about a month after Fong gave up his clipboard, the African foreman said, "Carry on, you bugger, or I'll buy one of those super drills that does do the work of ten fat men!"

Sam Fong sighed. "What do you want, *bwana*?"

"I am asking are you knowing what the drill is this side?"

"This is the drill," said Fong, holding up his drill.

"Are you being cheeky with me?" asked the foreman angrily. "I can have your bloody job if you act *kali* . . ."

Sam Fong stood up, brushed off the wood shavings, looked at the foreman, said, "You belong in a tall tree" in Chinese, and then, "*Kwaheri*, bye-bye." He mounted his bicycle and peddled quickly out of the Ministry of Works compound, away from the Work for Progress posters and the shrieks of the foreman, who was attempting to disperse the crowd of workmen that had gathered.

SAM FONG never went back. On the way home he made three resolutions: never trust a white, never trust a black, never be a carpenter; as he repeated these resolutions to himself he saw a sign reading "Store for Rent Aply Fakhru Enterprises Ltd.," and later that afternoon signed a ten-year lease with a pajama-clad Ismaili who demanded £50 in advance for a moldering empty shop at the lower end of Uhuru Avenue. In the contract was a clause which read, "And I promise to buy all stocks and stores and goods from the abovenamed Hassanali Fakhru at prices to be agreed upon so help me God." Only later, in the heat of argument, was this pointed out to Fong. The lumber for the shelves and counters, the bins, the vats, the scales, the light bulbs, the plate glass, were also bought, again under protest, from Fakhru. Twice a day, in Chinese and Swahili, Sam Fong said to Fakhru, "I hate you, I hate you . . . you're a bloodsucking Indian, and if you did this in China, the Emperor would cut your tongue out, your hands off, and he would wisely make your penis into sausage for the dogs!"

Hassanali Fakhru listened to the jerky Swahili, smiled, and answered, "The trouble with you foreigners is you're not interested in building a nation. You have no spirit of *Harambee*. You just make money, and then go back where you came from and leave our poor African brothers with nothing. Now me, I can tell you I am interested in developing this country and building a multiracial society. Buggers like you make my job very hard, let

me remind you, and give Asia a bad name. Now piss off, my friend."

Sam Fong would utter a vile Chinese oath and make his way, past hand-colored portraits of the Aga Khan with a garland around his neck, to the door. With a belch and smoothing his pajama front, Fakhru would return to his papers. It happened twice a day. There was no need, he felt, for either party to get excited: such was business. During these first six months Sam Fong worked on his shelves, and even taking into consideration the tyranny of Fakhru, Fong considered the six months to be very happy ones. He worked all day and far into the night sawing and sanding and banging pegs into the shelves and counters. He did not have to draw plans: he had a good eye and could measure everything by merely looking at it. He was foreman, workman, and customer. He was alone in his work and very happy with his tools and wood. He worked steadily, and the shelves in the shop in his mind soon became the shelves in Fakhru's hired *duka*. They were lovely large shelves, very strong and smooth, braced and solid. Fong knew they were beautiful, but still he remembered his resolutions and refused to do any carpentry for anyone but himself. He vowed never to allow himself the humiliation of being an employee ("Get on with the job or I'll sack you off!") or even a confidant ("Tell me, Fong, who's the keenest chap in the workshop?").

As the weeks passed he grew more and more worried about the prospect of becoming a grocer, while still resolved that he would never be a carpenter again. Being a grocer frightened him, opening his own store frightened him, and soon all this fear transformed itself into rage at night, and he started beating his wife to calm himself. His wife, Soo, understood and received each beating in good faith. It was just another wifely burden. Many times she had to remind herself of her obligation to shriek.

Two days before the store opened, Soo stayed in and busied herself with white paint and a large board. At the end of the day she showed Fong the sign: "Friend Frocery Pop in Please for Better Price Anywhere in Africa." She smiled. "This is your sign. This is your store, noble husband. You are now a grocer man," she said in Chinese. Instead of being pleased, Sam Fong felt only fear, and for her sign and her words Soo Fong was so severely beaten that she was unable to attend the Grand Opening.

"I am abundantly heppy — overjoyed I should say — to be the honored patron of this Grand Opening day of the Sam Fong grocery *duka*," Fakhru said to Sam Fong and the five African stragglers who had caught sight of the ribbon across the door of the grocery. Fakhru's speech,

written by his son, who had been directed: "Big words in this, or I'll kick your ass to Zanzibar," took over thirty minutes to deliver. Fong agreed to the speech only because his own English was faulty; in fact, his entire English vocabulary consisted of nouns for food and perhaps ten verbs, which he always used in the present continuous tense. He felt humiliated and helpless; his bitter enemy and master, Hassanali Fakhru, stood in the doorway and spoke.

Fakhru referred to Sam Fong's perseverance and high values, Asian values, tried and true. He went on to speak at length of how he, Fakhru, had started out from just such humble beginnings. He spoke of the necessity for lifting oneself up into the world by one's own bootstraps. Snatches of the Koran, progress slogans, and parts of pop songs ("As our friends the Beatles say, money cannot buy us love") were also in the speech, and he finished by saying, "I do believe I have covered up all the major points . . ."

Soon it came time to cut the ribbon. Sam Fong held out a pair of Mother's Own Cutting Scissors



(Fakhru Enterprises Ltd., four shillings, sixpence), and Fakhru and Fong, each with his thumb in a metal loop, began sawing away at the ribbon. The leverage was wrong, and instead of the blades working against each other, they were far apart. A good minute passed, and the ribbon was not even frayed. Fakhru lost his temper, pulled Fong's thumb out of the loop, and threw the scissors

down. Then he lifted the ribbon, and chomping down once with betel-stained teeth, tore the ribbon in half. "That's how we do such things where I come from," said Fakhru, holding the two ends of the ribbon. Sam Fong stood impassive and stiff. The people on the sidewalk clapped and then went away. Off in the distance Soo moaned.

"And now for the Grand Opening," said Fakhru. "I shall be your first customer."

The two men entered the store. Except for the carefully made furnishings, the store was almost bare. Sam Fong went behind the counter and folded his arms.

"If you please, kind sir," said Fakhru, showing his teeth, "I would like a becket of tea."

"Big-big or small-small?" inquired Fong, now leaning on the counter gingerly in the manner of a grocer.

"Bit smaller," said Fakhru.

Fong went to a corner of the store where on a large shelf sat a tiny box of tea. He placed the box of tea in front of Fakhru.

"You see," said Fakhru, "it's not that I am not liking tea. I'm craze for tea. But I am having lots of tea becketts already. I just want to be your first customer. I'll take it."

"Two shillings only," said Fong.

Fakhru slapped his fat palm against his wide perspiring forehead and made a meaty plop. "You said *two shillings!*"

"Right. Now I grocery man, you customer. You pay, I take money."

"You buy this goods for me for sixpence, you sell to me for two shillings. You call that business?"

"What you calling it?"

"When I have to pay you one shilling sixpence to be first customer, I rather be second customer and save money. I call it robbery."

"You steal from me, I steal from you. That business," said Fong.

"I give you ninepence only. If you refuse I give you broken arm quick," said Fakhru, throwing two coins on the counter. "That the thanks I get for being first customer."

Fakhru spat a long stream of betel juice through the notch in his front teeth. The juice landed on the floor like a red bubbly snake, a bad omen suddenly materializing out of thin air. Clutching his tiny box of tea in his hand, he stormed out of the shop with a swish and flap of his large pajama trousers. His jaw was moving back and forth rapidly, kneading his betel for another go.

With Fakhru gone the shop was in silence. The two Grand Opening ribbons had fluttered when Fakhru brushed by, but now they hung limp. Sam Fong stared past the empty shelves to the empty door. From the woodwork came a slow wail: Soo in pain several rooms away. Fong

dropped the two coins into a wooden box, leaned against the counter, took a deep breath, sighed, and four years passed.

IN FOUR years all that Sam Fong had managed to do was to perfect a tight grin which he was able to switch on and off. As a carpenter he did not have to grin at all. As a grocer he found that he spent most of the day grinning. He would not have noticed it except that it made his face hurt. On the other hand, his wife, who had very large teeth, found it a great relief to grin. All of this, Fong reflected, was business.

The carpenter in Fong did not die. Fong continued to hammer, saw, and plane; when the counter got very dirty or the shelves very greasy it was the carpenter and not the grocer in Sam Fong that took charge. Instead of washing the counter, he sanded it down; if there was a lot of grease on the counter, it was planed. When a feeble African woman dropped a whole bottle of vinegar on the floor one day, Fong rushed into the back room, grabbed his crowbar and hammer, tore up the floorboards, and fitted new ones. After these carpentry exercises, done at top speed, Fong felt very well; it was a much better feeling than he got from beating his wife. Hammering helped him fight his moments of depression, though after four years, spent mostly leaning against the counter, Fong felt like throwing up the whole business and walking away. His moments of remorse over quitting the carpentry job were quickly dispelled, if not brightened, by the memory of the African at the Ministry of Works telling him to carry on, that keen chap who tormented the carpenters and who, if given a second chance, would make Fong's life miserable. Fong remembered his resolution and went back to hammering mindlessly on the counter; at other times he would go to see Fakhru and buy what Fakhru called "stocks and stores."

The largest-selling items in the store were the five kinds of skin lightener (three for women, two for men). Sam Fong thought it was odd that there should be only one kind of bread, one kind of matches, one kind of cigarettes, one kind of ketchup, and five kinds of skin lightener. He made up a joke which he told to everyone who bought a tube of skin-lightening cream: customer walks in; customer asks for skin lightener; Fong gets skin lightener, and hands it to customer saying, "Now you be Chinese like me." No one thought it was funny. Once when he asked an African what he was going to do with the cream, the African said it was good for the cold weather; it prevented lips from getting stiff and (this was the African's exact

word) "unsightly." With each crate of skin lightener a poster was enclosed; Fong studied these carefully. There were always four characters in the picture, each a different dusky shade. Fong's favorite was the airplane poster. On this one the four people were deployed around the movable stairs of a just arrived plane. A shiny purplish man oiled a tire, a man with a dull carbonized face wiped the rail of the stairs, and both men looked blackly upon their shabby tasks; their coveralls were soiled with blotches of soot and finger wipings of plane grease. Standing on the runway was a mocha air hostess greeting a prosperous quadroon-yellow African carrying an attaché case. A sizzling part had been burned across one temple, and a thought bubble at the side of his head contained the following: "Boy, she sure is some dish! I'm sure glad I brought that extra tube!"

This yellow African with a slightly Oriental look about him stuck in Fong's mind and would not leave. And though none of his customers saw the humor in it, and went on believing privately that even a small tube of skin lightener could squirt them surely into the middle class, Sam Fong persisted with his joke: "Now you be Chinese like me."

When Fong went to buy "stocks and stores" from Fakhru, he made up his mind that he would buy only the necessary items; inevitably he came back with much more than he wanted, though much less than he bargained for. On paper what he bought looked like a great deal. When it was delivered in the rattling gray Peugeot van that bore Fakhru's name, it looked like very little. These sessions with Fakhru wore Fong down and caused Soo Fong many days in bed recovering from the bruises which the enraged and humiliated Sam Fong inflicted on her. The beatings were, as before, accepted by her with great forbearance; "welcomed" is perhaps the wrong word, though there was more than mere acceptance in her attitude toward the beatings, and often she was pleased in the knowledge that she was fulfilling a useful function. In order for Fong to get what he wanted from Fakhru, he had to agree to buy other things.

Fakhru had introduced Fong to the fascination of black market merchandise. "You know bleck market?" Fakhru had asked. Sam Fong stared. Fakhru translated into Swahili.

"Yes," said Fong. "In town."

"Where in town?" asked Fakhru.

"Where they sell the bananas," said Sam Fong.

Fakhru smiled and wiped his whole sweating face on his pajama front, which he lifted with two hands. He spat. "Not *that* market. Now I tell you about *real* bleck market."

He told him. But after two transactions in the

Congo (one in Kinshasa, one in Lubumbashi), Fong was lost. He never understood why the border guards should be bribed; he never fully comprehended the smoked fish thrown on top of the merchandise, the exchange-control shell game in which Congolese francs were converted into salt, then into ivory, then into cigarettes, and finally, at some equatorial outstation, into shillings, and at some future date into rupees.

Fong nodded. "Now I know black market."

Black market, with its ritual of almost religious proportions, came to be synonymous with high quality and instant wealth. Sam Fong accumulated mattresses, yards and yards of Belgian cloth, galvanized pails, and dozens of other items which no one bought, but which Fong thought useful to have around in case a customer should come into the store with more than a shilling. At the start of the bargain, when Fakhru would mention an item, Fong would recoil.

"Good recapped tires just arrived."

"Don't want tires," Fong would say. "I selling grocery food."

"Good recapped tires you don't want," Fakhru would say. "'Sall right with me. Everybody want those tires, those *bleck market* tires."

"You say *black market* tires?"

"That is what I did say."

And Fong would buy a dozen. Eventually he would sell three, and the rest would be used in flower beds for planned but unfinished gardens; one hung by a rope would become a swing; others would be cut to pieces to be made into sandals.

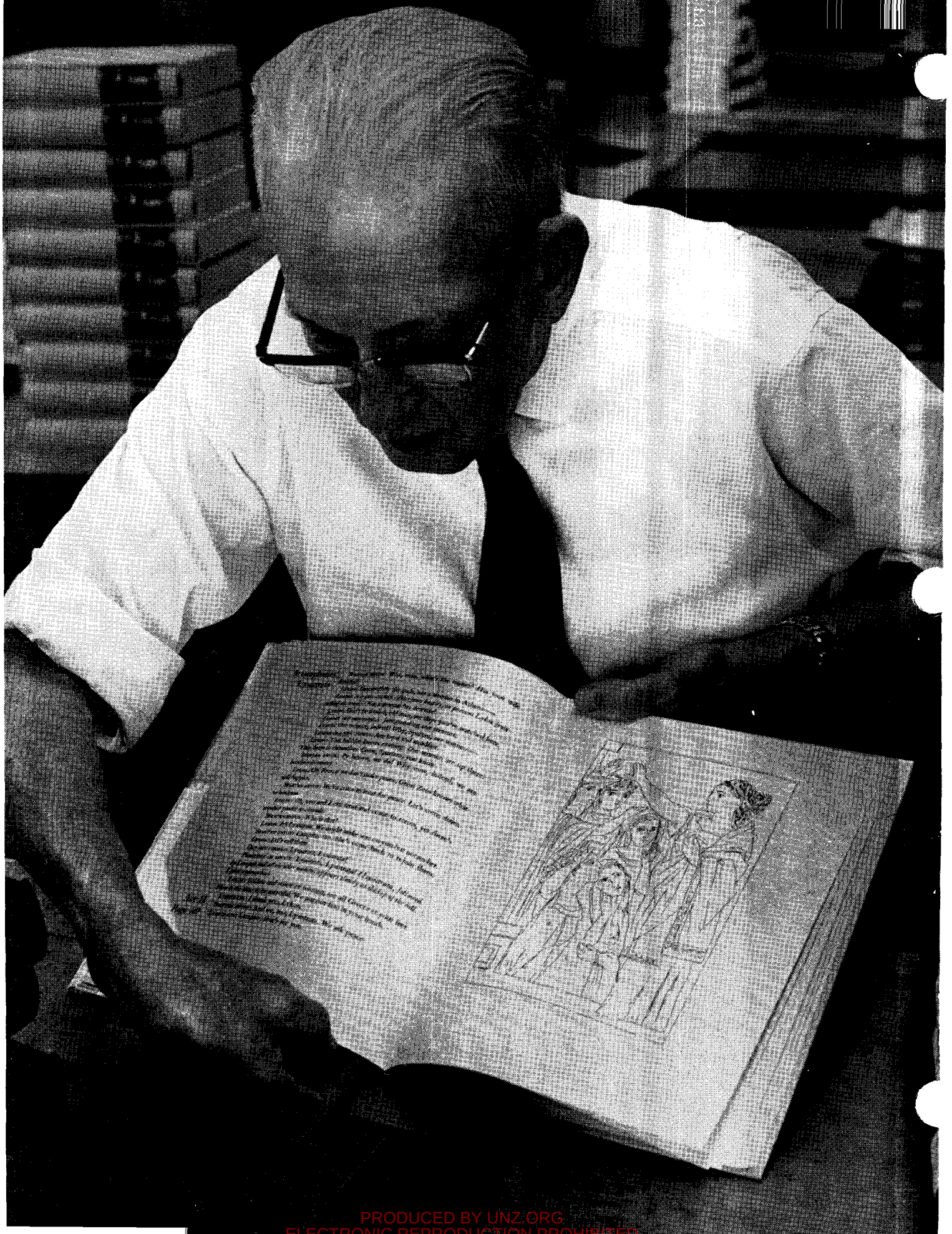
With the exception of some tea, sugar, matches, rice, patent medicine (Samson Blood-Purifying Lozenges, Uncle Pompey's Gripe Water), hair straightener, and skin lightener, the goods that Fakhru fobbed off onto Sam Fong — and, in particular, the black market goods — never sold. If they did, they yielded no profit. They were usually too big to be displayed, and so the store always seemed uniquely bare. Soo thought of taking down the grocery-store sign every time Fong bought a new black market item. When he bought mattresses, Soo imagined a new sign: Sam Fong Mattress Shop; or the tires: Sam Fong Tires for All Occasions; but always he would sell a few and permit the rest to be transmogrified into sandals and flowerpots. The mattresses that were not sold were torn apart by a cripple who, for two shillings a mattress, made each spring into a coat hanger. The coat hangers did not sell either, but when Soo pointed this out to Sam Fong, he replied, "Yes, I know, Africans don't want them: no coat, no coat hanger. But they're easy to store, no?"

A system was inevitable; it was the difference between life and death, and after four years Fong had worked it out in detail. He made lists of the

things Africans bought and had a final list of high-priority items: cigarettes sold singly, matches, blood-purifying lozenges, fruit salts, sugar, hair straightener, skin lightener, aspirin, kerosene, unrefined Nubian gin, tea, and a few other things. The dust-covered canned goods he learned never to restock; they had been on the shelves since the Grand Opening day. Among these were ten cans of Spam which had been packed in Austin, Minnesota; thirty-five cans of Australian processed cheese from Melbourne; and about a gross of cans with no label except the following scrap, sometimes studied by Fong, stuck to one of the crates: "The ruddy-bright delicious juice of fine tomatoes — excellent for any meal or as a between-meal refresher and a terrific source for Vitamins C and A" — the next part was illegible — then: "*Serving Suggestions*. Serve chilled as a beverage; hot as a soup or beverage; or use it for making aspic salads, sauces, stews, etc. Drink it morning, noon, or night . . . *Quick 'n' Easy Appetizer or Snack Idea*: With your favorite crackers add one three-ounce package . . ." The rest was torn.

Sam Fong had stopped dusting the cans and had given up trying to fathom the writing on the crate. To open one of these label-less cans was to throw three shillings to the winds, for whatever was in cans Fong did not like. At first he had said to his customers, "Just arrived from Minn — nice good meat in very strong can," or "Honest better price for this sent today by my brother in Australia," or, in the case of the gross of unmarked cans, "What is inside is secret — only three shillings to have secret revealed." No one bought the cans; this ceased to worry Sam Fong and even pleased Soo Fong. No grocery store was complete, she felt, unless there were cans on the shelves. Empty shelves upset her. It is perhaps in the nature of every grocer to develop a weird anthropomorphism for groceries: Soo felt sorry for the tiny stacks on the large shelves; to stare at a pyramid of three small boxes of tea, alone in a corner of the store, untouched, caused her genuine pain. She averted her eyes from the pathetic little piles of unsold merchandise in the grocery store.

LIFE went on. Somehow Fong managed a small profit, but nearly all of it was spent in rent, "stocks and stores," and overhead expenses. Some he put in the bank, but only as a gesture, for he never banked more than a few shillings. The last week of the month — the week before Soo took her abacus down from the shelf and began flinging the beads to and fro as her husband barked his cheek-tightening Chinese at her — was a terrible one: the tea was watered to a sickly urinous color, meat



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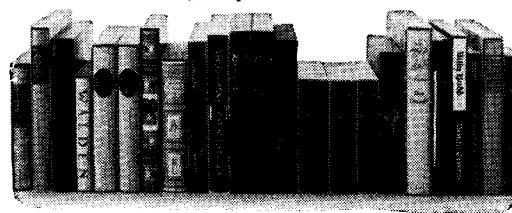
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did not exist, no one used soap, and grasshoppers caught under the streetlights at night and fried were the main course at every meal. The children sat in their corner of the back room and grumbled over their grasshoppers. Sam Fong would silence their complaints with "Eat these nice fat insects. You are lucky to have them. In China they are a delicacy."

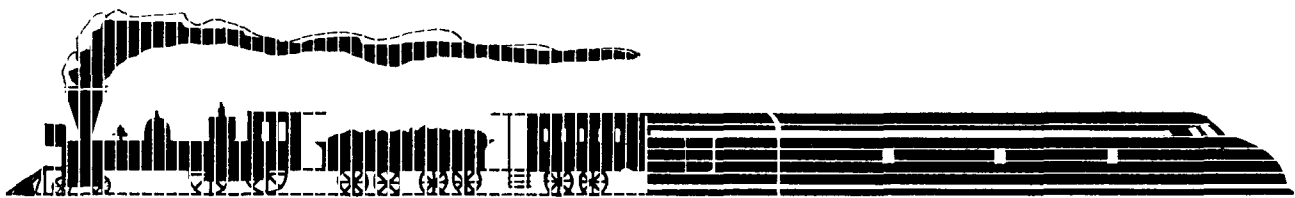
Often Fong regretted having made his resolution about never being a carpenter, but the resolution was irrevocable. The other two — never trust a white man, never trust a black man — also caused him considerable anxiety. His customers, when they appeared at their infrequent intervals, were either white or black. If a white man bought something (the whites never bought much more than cigarettes, but they always bought the whole package of twenty and never asked for only two or three), Fong felt he was being cheated or spied upon. Africans made him nervous as well, and many were the times when an African in a clean shirt and tie, perhaps even wearing a suit, walked in and awakened fear in Fong, the helpless fright that envisioned the African announcing that he was the new owner of the grocery store and that Fong should pick up the bundle of papyrus and begin sweeping the floor. This, in four years, had not happened; but the anxiety, together with the knowledge that Africans were in power and he himself was "free" (the image of a man splashing in a wide muddy river occurred to him), prompted another saying which he repeated incessantly to his wife: "A man who is free to feed himself might choose poison." The African who, in six brief months, became foreman of the workshop also became the symbol of what Fong imagined would be inevitable frustration and eventual failure. He trusted no one except a fellow Chinaman who ran a camera shop and spoke of going to Canada. There were, he had heard, two other Chinese in the country, but he had never seen them. They lived in the bush. His dealings with whites inspired less anxiety than his dealings with Africans, but much more futility, for he was certain that the whites were responsible for his ended career in carpentry. His resolutions did not cover brown men; he continued to do business with Fakhru, and, with more rage than anxiety, more insolence than fear, get cheated. He knew he was being cheated by Fakhru, and he explained this in another proverb: "Behind every dark man is a white man making money."

Fong was more worried about being cheated than he was about making money. Cheating made him squirm; it made him nervous and murderous. Making money was not one of his dreams. He did not sit in his store and dream of Nubians carrying trays of fried pork and jugs of rice wine, tall black

men in silk, wearing gold daggers and waiting on him, cooling him with feathery fans. He did not imagine himself sitting in the back seat of a big car shouting for his driver to turn left, or, with the car radio blasting, drawing up to the Nile Villa Hotel while dozens of curious and greedy onlookers asked, "Who is that wealthy Chinaman?" and stared. These were Soo's dreams, two of them at any rate, and she stopped speaking of them to Fong when quite in earnest he beat her unmercifully for repeating them to him. He had explained to Soo that this was another world, her world of fantasy, and it was not populated with people like Sam or Soo Fong. The idea of wealth was not that it was unattainable, it was unthinkable; when the thought was uttered he ridiculed it. He was meant to serve, to work; and lately his preoccupation with being swindled prevented him from having the time even to ridicule the thought of wealth.

Sometimes he thought of happiness. This idea of happiness was set among wood shavings in a noisy workshop. Table legs were being turned on a lathe, drills scraped against wood and bored into the center of thick boards, gouges turned up long curls on doors that would be graceful, and muscular men pounded pegs into joints, while Sam Fong, like the leader in a Chinese musical revue, directed the busy men with a little lemon branch, his nostrils full of sawdust. No one was paid, no one was cheated, and lovely smooth furniture bounced out of the workshop, on short hard legs, like indestructible little men, sturdy and mindless. This could hardly be called the dream of a voluptuary, but this was Sam Fong's dream, based on his happiest days in Africa when there was no money and when he had plenty to eat. He had renounced it, but because he had renounced this as a way of life, it became sacred to him: he would see it after death. The workshop in this other sphere was bathed in a rosy glow from the lumber room; each naked man acted on his command and was dwarfish and serene in his industry. Money had nothing to do with it, though cheating certainly did; he knew that for the time being he had been cheated out of it all.

He narrowed his eyes at the empty shelves and sold an African a two-ounce tube of skin lightener and three cigarettes. Though the tube cost three shillings sixpence and the cigarettes tenpence, he took the African's twenty-shilling note, and without blinking or moving his head, or even without looking at the man, gave him the exact change. And so Sam Fong became, after more than four years, a shopkeeper; or as Fakhru put it, "Now my friend you are a *dukawallah*. It should be abundantly clear that there is a place for you in East Africa to grow and prosper."



Once the symbol of American technological achievement and of fortunes mightily made, the transportation wonder of the nineteenth century has been victimized by the present century's faster pace. Whether this will prove ultimately to be a boon to conservationists and culturemongers is a matter of some concern to Mr. Kronenberger, ATLANTIC critic.

WHO SHOT THE IRON HORSE?

by LOUIS KRONENBERGER

THE railroad, assuredly one of the supreme achievements of the nineteenth century, has become, in America at least, one of the most blasted burdens of the twentieth. At best today it resembles a fabled ruin, a vast fallen empire. More commonly it suggests a stodgy and even dirtier-looking subway; a sprawling anachronism that conveys not ruin but mess, not age but senility, not something speeding across continents but stalled between stations. To the air-minded, it is a beastly by-product of fog; to car-driving millions, it is a curio about to share the fate of the corset, the icebox, the Welsbach lamp, the napkin ring, and the livery stable.

Yet in 1966 shareholders of railroad stock were paid \$502 million in cash dividends, "more than in any other year in the industry's history." So we are informed very early in Peter Lyon's *To Hell in a Day Coach* (Lippincott, \$5.95), a work which bears the subtitle "An Exasperated Look at American Railroads." Mr. Lyon is one of those people, themselves verging on anachronism, who enjoy traveling on trains, yet can enjoy very few of the trains they travel on. But Mr. Lyon offers no plaintive lament, no elegy written in a country waiting room; his scrutiny is as dry-eyed as it seems lynx-eyed; his splutterings run not to swearwords but statistics; his treatment, from the bad old days of plunder to the recent cries of pain, is bluntly financial. His

book is brisk and a little breezy in manner, but his bibliography seems solid, and his citations are specific, nor does he offer — or need to offer — sensationalism in place of truth. Our nineteenth-century railroad history is an obstreperous drama of rapacity and romance, with an all-star cast of scoundrels, compared with whom mere train robbers, the James brothers or the Daltons, play bit parts. It is an epic of swindling, of neo-Viking pillaging, of neanderthalish power grabs, whose methods turned legislatures into lackeys, whose transactions turned watered stock into wine. It is a flag-draped dossier of chicanery at the hilly end of Pennsylvania Avenue and of timidity at the other. The Iron Horse as an industry, like the horse itself, was forever belching smoke and banging into whatever got in its way. However gifted its rivals in our most florid age of robber barons, railroading was the Abou Ben Adhem of industrial villainy.

This is true not least because, from the very outset, our premier villain was looked upon as a public servant, as a national benefactor; hence was deserving of public funds, hence was entitled to grants of land, hence was the plump heiress of Eminent Domain. Public grants became the darling of private greed; hence the heiress was wooed wherever possible, or was jilted wherever expedient. Before even 10,000 miles of U.S. track had been laid

down, railroad policy, says Mr. Lyon, had already crystallized as ignoring, dismissing, and sweeping under the roadbed the public interest. Already during the 1840s there were anguished public outcries about "discriminatory freight rates, poor passenger service, filthy accommodations," and the like. There were squawks and cries that the state should own the railroads, something not easily consummated since the railroads owned the statehouse. Thus, Erasmus Corning, the earliest of the great public servants and a power in Albany, sensibly became a state senator himself, while his colleague from Buffalo, Dean Richmond, became Democratic state chairman. Making trained seals of other politicians, the two men linked arms and railroads, and lo, the New York Central was born.

WITH that the grease-palmed prologue ends, and the curtain goes up on the brass-knucked first act. With that, we are in the presence of famous names and on the eve of infamous events, with scoundrelism rampant and scandals rife. Just a few years more and the four great Eastern trunk lines — the New York Central, the Pennsylvania, the Erie, and the B & O — will combine, in the way of rates and the like, against the public, while colliding among themselves. The first generation of railroad magnificoes — Commodore Vanderbilt, Daniel Drew, Jay Gould, Jim Fisk, Russell Sage — will trample on everything, even one another. Thus the Commodore, having captured the Central, laid siege to the Erie, precipitating that "public spectacle of greed" which "stands alone in our history" — the Erie War, wherein Vanderbilt was licked by his juniors, Gould and Fisk, one of whose very first acts was to put on their board of directors William Marcy Tweed. Licking his wounds, the aquatic Commodore watered the Central's stock, while Gould and Fisk permitted the Erie's stockholders "ten million dollars of debt." In the course of events, Drew used fishy securities and fled to New Jersey with \$6 million in cash "wrung" from the Commodore, who conspired to have him kidnapped back to New York. During all this, New York's legislature was openly bribed, and its Supreme Court corrupted.

The East's Big Four in railroads being now in good hands, the West responded with its Big Four in men. Nonrailroaders, but otherwise unimpeachably qualified, Mark Hopkins, Charles Crocker, Leland Stanford, and Collis P. Huntington became transportation-minded, and in due course, at Promontory Point, Utah, the Golden Spike was driven in. Around one of the most restful words in the language, *pacific* — whether Union, Central, Southern, Northern, or Western, plus the Great Northern for kicks — were to develop, with

the arrival of Harriman and Hill, with the intrusion of Morgan and Wall Street, some exceedingly superior crises and some of the most valiant blows for freebooting ever struck.

Doing for a turn-of-the-century generation what the Erie War had done after the Civil War, the titanic Northern Pacific–Great Northern hostilities set Hill, Pierpont Morgan, and George F. Baker, with the Vanderbilts and U.S. Steel "looming in the background," against Harriman, Jacob H. Schiff of Kuhn, Loeb, and James Stillman of the National City Bank, with, looming in the background, William Rockefeller and H. H. Rogers of Standard Oil. After many coups and much carnage, but no decisive conquest, Morgan devised an "entente" that led TR, as President, to take action against it, and the Supreme Court to decree its dissolution. Harriman, whom Mr. Lyon calls "the most brilliant railroad executive in American history," came off best, getting back securities costing him \$80 million that he could sell for twice as much.

Mr. Lyon distributes other awards and honorary degrees. Of the early great, Russell Sage was the "most pernicious . . . miserly, devious, an habitual liar, a perjurer and a betrayer of his associates"; a convicted usurer, a corrupter of governors and legislatures at a cost of two million and a profit of well over twenty. Collis P. Huntington Mr. Lyon salutes as the biggest of the Four: "ruthless, grim, cold, crafty," whom someone neatly described as "scrupulously dishonest," though I personally prefer a remark, which Mr. Lyon fails to quote, attributed to Huntington himself: "Whatever is not nailed down is mine. Whatever I can pry loose is not nailed down." We all know how the Central's W. H. Vanderbilt spoke of the public; the elder Morgan, for whom all Roads led to Wall Street, said less profanely: "I owe the public nothing." A president-maker of railroads, Morgan one day phoned a certain Charles S. Mellen. Their conversation, as recalled at a public hearing by Mellen:

MORGAN: Is that you, Mr. Mellen?

MELLEN: Yes.

MORGAN: Anybody hear what you say?

MELLEN: No.

MORGAN: Will you take over the Northern Pacific?

MELLEN: Yes.

MORGAN: Will you leave it all to me?

MELLEN: Yes.

MORGAN: Goodbye.

Morgan also, in 1903, made Mellen president of the New Haven, and Mr. Lyon makes Morgan progenitor of all the New Haven's woes.

As the century turned, the wheel of fortune held steady; by 1905 no other industry equaled the railroads in revenue or power: their capital was esti-

mated at ten times that of the country's banks and trust companies. Sixty years later a single "rival" corporation, General Motors, could boast greater revenues than the entire railroad industry. It is easy to account for much of the decline with the single word technology — cars, buses, planes, and trucks have competed and increasingly conquered. Add motels to cars, and you have 100 percent door-to-door living. Subtract planes from business, and you don't merely put back the clock, you all but restore the hourglass. Yet, granting such competition, what of tactics and countermoves? Are there no longer any great railroad strategists?

Well, it seems that for a long while the railroads sneered at such upstarts as trucks, which, under 400,000 in 1921, numbered more than 3 million by 1933. Even earlier, railroads showed no great affection for their big breadwinner, freight. So far as they were concerned with our country's welfare, World War I could have been World War lost: in 1917, the United States was short 158,000 freight cars, while nearly 200,000 of them "stood idle on the tracks of the Eastern roads." The government finally took over the railroads, from January 1, 1918, to March 1, 1920, pouring money into repairs and improvements, while the railroads, in due course, filed claims for damages. The New York Central, for example, claimed \$11 million, and finally paid the government \$23. The Pennsylvania sought nothing for itself, knowing that the United States had spent \$218 million on it; after much hollering, it was let off with paying \$90 million.

The Pennsylvania has been the G.O.M. of railroads, often a key to their mergers, gobbles, and grabs, and its recent marriage to the New York Central suggests that of a sort of iron duke to a highborn dowager with a limp, and less for love than to cut down on the housekeeping. Of course the Chinese-boxes form of ownership that is now fashionable in all industries has been axiomatic for generations with the biggest railroads. Thus, they once for five months disputed who should own the Lackawanna before the Lackawanna's president even heard what was going on. In the 1920s, with railroad profits exceeding a billion a year, empire-snatching went right along with bull-market gymnastics. After 1929, everything in railways tottered and tumbled, till by 1932 profits had sagged to \$325 million; five years more, and over \$3 billion worth of railroad bonds were in default of interest. World War II put the industry back on its feet, but the railroads mistook their present for their future, while the trucks were all the time taking the future over. As railroad freight business went down, railroad rates went up, and business went down further, from 67 percent of the freight traffic in 1945 to 46 percent in 1958; and by 1959 the railroads were hauling, for one example,

less than 8 percent of new cars. Since then, owing partly to outsiders' bright ideas, have come much brighter days. Piggybacks and auto racks, hopper cars and unit trains have, to antiphonal screams from truckers and bargemen, brought freight back to its ancestral home. By 1966 railroads were hauling nearly 50 percent of new cars, hopper cars had become great granaries on wheels, and the old faithful, freight, was riding to glory.

There remains Mr. Lyon's day coach, en route elsewhere. Mr. Lyon is exasperated indeed about current passenger service; he cites many horrendous examples of how brutal, how abominable, how indefensible it is — or, worse, how nonexistent. To be sure, the first economic truth that my generation mastered — it was an open secret in the fourth grade — was that freight trains made money and that passenger trains lost it. Hence for railroad bigwigs the passenger has not just been any old worm, but a costly tapeworm. Mr. Lyon thinks this attitude started more than a century ago when passenger fares had been legally restricted to two cents a mile, in retaliation for which the industry today would presumably restrict passenger service to two trains a month.

I FULLY agree with all Mr. Lyon's accusations and indictments of the past, but, thanks to a friend whose splendidly independent thinking has impressed me since boyhood, I must wonder whether Mr. Lyon's thoughts on the present may not, from his great love of trains, be emotionally blinkered. As my friend, who wishes his name withheld, puts it, could what Mr. Lyon considers a cold-blooded railroad ploy to wipe out *human* freight be in reality something quite different and highly commendable — namely, a fine, manly condemnation of certain discreditable traits in America's business life? In other words, might not the railroads' current approach to passenger service constitute a *deliberate rejection* of America's dog-eat-dog competitiveness, of its craze for new technological gadgets, of its gaudy drum-beating promotion, of its glossy unmeaningful packaging, of its indecent pandering to that wallet-fingering hero who is Always Right, the Customer? Frankly, asks my friend, isn't the railroads' relaxed policy a blessed relief in the face of Avis tailgating Hertz, or of this airline offering caviar for breakfast, or that one free manicures and hairdos? In what Mr. Lyon sees as calculated passenger hardships, may not others find a sort of industrial idyll, a shift on the part of business from the commercial to the cultural? Let me jot down a few points.

1. In striking contrast to their once greedy policy of clamoring for government money for passenger service, railroads today have been spectacularly

refusing it. They have actually beseeched the government to be let off carrying the mail — with the impressive result that, as against 10,000 mail-carrying-for-money passenger trains in 1935, there were in 1967 only 876.

2. At a time when the shocking business of demolishing historic landmarks all over America is being everywhere protested as a cultural crime, the New Haven Railroad — to give just one example — is carefully preserving 129 grade crossings and 179 bridges which cannot but delight the connoisseur of relics, being all of them from fifty to seventy-five years old.

3. All the same, the New Haven isn't taking an irresponsibly aesthetic view of such bracing sights; isn't for a moment setting beauty above bumps and bruises, or art above bandaged heads. In line with its policy of not risking human lives, it sometime back conscientiously reduced its passenger service; beyond that, it would much prefer that the public visit these historic spots by taxicab or car pool.

4. In yet another way, the railroads are putting culture above cash: for people who strongly favor rail travel, the railroads have worked out ingenious connections between one train and another, so as to offer passengers, en route, not only king-sized rest periods in commodious terminals, but the chance to tour many of our most picturesque cities, often for six or eight hours — time enough to visit the leading parks and squares, the zoo, the art museum, the city hall, the new model reformatory, besides looking in on an old school friend or a cousin with money.

5. In paying homage to the past, and eschewing the parvenu brand-new, the railroads are in effect creating portable museums — what my friend terms Williamsburgs-on-wheels; are proffering prime examples of the proud craftsmanship and impeccable coachwork of more leisured days. In time, it is hoped, there will be identifying plaques and inscriptions accompanying this fine period equipment: *Warren G. Harding Dozed Here; This Leather First Cracked Under the Weight of William Howard Taft.*

Can such arguments be idly dismissed? Mr. Lyon, to be sure, riding his own theory, manages by juggling facts and figures to contribute a more sinister interpretation. A tireless burrower, he finds evidence that the Post Office Department canceled contracts with the railroads because, for example, they required thirty-eight to fifty-six hours to deliver mail at \$438 to \$516 a van, as against truck deliveries in twenty-six hours at \$420 a bigger van. He also argues that the railroads deliberately tried to get rid of the mail as a way of getting rid of the trains. He asserts, again, that in "two states" and "several sizable cities" there is "no railway passenger service whatever." He claims

that Robert R. Young, a popularity seeker who re-organized the B & O and the New York Central, ran paid advertisements reading: "A Hog Can Cross the Country Without Changing Trains — But You Can't." Well, well. Just *imagine* a hog changing trains — why, the sight of it would be the action picture, the news story, of the week.

Mr. Lyon further charges the railroads with deliberately failing to list certain trains; with instructing ticket-office agents to deny that certain others exist; he even charges the Santa Fe with "advising people to fly." He claims that certain information clerks are "evidently instructed to take the phone off the hook and forget to put it back, resulting in an all-day busy signal, until at 5 p.m. a recording suggests trying again at 9 a.m. the next day." Mr. Lyon cites Governor Hughes of New Jersey, who kept getting a busy signal for forty-five minutes before a Pennsylvania R.R. information clerk answered the phone. Is that so odd? I've gotten a busy signal for fifty-five minutes just phoning my wife — and as for having the phone off the hook, I have it off the hook right now so as not to be disturbed while writing this, and I'll wager Mr. Lyon had his off the hook while writing *To Hell in a Day Coach*. How else can anybody, including overburdened information clerks, ever get their work done?

I certainly don't want to seem pigheaded in all this: Mr. Lyon does have a good deal of what I suppose might be called ammunition. Even concerning the general thesis that passenger trains have always provided an operating deficit, Mr. Lyon insists that this is a "phantom deficit," a "statistical mirage," and that "millions of dollars of maintenance and other overhead costs" are levied against passenger charges "which would still have to be paid if every passenger train disappeared tomorrow." It has been well said that there are two sides to every story, and on purely sentimental grounds, I must confess I'm on Mr. Lyon's side. For I look further back than he can, to an age of train travel when, if railroads were America's most ruthless industry, for a growing boy they were its most romantic. The charcoal-broiled steaks — a rarity then — in the diner; the fried chicken, as the C & O stopped at stations in Virginia, sold from baskets through the train-car windows; the chance to ride in the locomotive cab, with permission to blow the whistle; the child's nose pressed against the lower-berth window as the train raced through flickeringly lighted villages at midnight . . . Well, suppose Mr. Lyon is right. What can we do to bring his coldhearted, cashminded railroad executives to their knees? I can't imagine that the classic device would help much — nothing would make these men happier than a boycott.

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Arts and Letters

Dance of Death

by John W. Aldridge

The literary movement known as Black Humor or Dark Comedy, which achieved a certain inflated prominence in the early sixties, has lately shown signs of reaching some condition of impasse or exhaustion. The high claims of its initial publicity have not been fulfilled, and although it has attracted talents as diversely original as John Barth, Joseph Heller, Thomas Pynchon, Bruce Jay Friedman, and Donald Barthelme, these writers continue to seem notable more for their potential than for their clearly major distinction. The movement has also been compromised by the accumulation around it of a small army of camp followers, clowns, and pitchmen, who have apparently seen in it a chance to cash in on their mediocrity through emulation of their betters, and who have busied themselves perverting the styles of Black Humor into affectations, and affectations into platitudes.

From the beginning the movement has had considerably more than its hare of critical attention because it appeared to be a development toward imaginative revitalization of a form that had long been moribund, the form of novelistic satire and self-parody, and because it seemed to

promise some renewal of relationship between fiction and the actualities of the social world, a relationship which had grown so tenuous in the forties and fifties that vast sectors of the reading public eagerly mistook the erotic voyeurisms of John O'Hara for penetrating insights into the sociology of American life.

But it has gradually become evident that the promises which critics discovered in Black Humor were projections more of their own hopes than of creative possibilities actually present in the movement itself. For

**Unspeakable Practices,
Unnatural Acts**
by Donald Barthelme
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$4.95)

just as Black Humor has all along been characterized by a kind of fashionableness achieved without passing through any of the arduous stages of slow arrival and gradual acceptance, so it has quickly ossified into one more cliché of anti-cliché, one more casualty of the instantly assimilative and accommodative processes of our culture. As has happened with so much post-avant-garde art, there seems to have been only the briefest

interval between the time when Black Humor was recognized as an important innovative gesture and the time when it was absorbed into style and decor and became nearly indistinguishable from the advertising gimmicks and promotional techniques which have so often been the rightful objects of its horror. The pose or stance of the Black Humorist soon became as familiar and predictable and as falsely provocative as the set of a *Vogue* mannequin's thighs. Suddenly, it seemed capable of registering only the histrionics of a ritual angst, a merely ornamental, because creatively unearned, absurdity, a sleek couturier note of apocalypse.

Yet it was in the nature of Black Humor to be peculiarly susceptible to this kind of debasement. Even at its best it always verged perilously on the sick joke, the nightclub wisecrack, the pop art slapstick of the comic-strip cartoon. Its characteristic humor was often more black-face than black, and the ubiquitous Catch-22 of its satire seemed too flip and feeble, and above all too *good-natured*, a mockery of the insidious workings of bureaucratic conspiracy. In fact, the most crippling weakness of Black Humor was that it cut itself

off from the vital source of effective satire — the close observation of the social and political world — just because it was too easily horrified by the grotesqueness and complexity of that world, and so found it less painful to retreat into cuteness than to endure and create the true dark comedy of contemporary anguish. In its programmatic preoccupation with the sickness, the absurdity, the incomprehensibility of events, it abdicated its responsibility to deal coherently with events. The result was that, except in a very few cases, such as Barth's *The Sot-Weed Factor* and Friedman's *Stern*, the prime requirement of successful satire was never fulfilled by Black Humor writers: the living reality of the object or condition being satirized was too obliquely suggested in their work or was altogether missing from it.

It has often been argued in defense of Black Humor that fiction in our time has lost the possibility of making this social connection because the events of the social world have become themselves fictitious. Life not only imitates fiction but assimilates to itself the fiction-making functions, so that the happenings reported on any day in the newspapers will in effect out-imagine the creative mind and thus cheat it of its revelatory and prophetic powers. But this would seem to suggest that fiction is best produced in dull ages, and the history of literature indicates that just the opposite is true. Rather, it seems to be the case that contemporary experience has so anesthetized us to the impact of grotesque and appalling occurrences that we no longer believe they can have any connection with, or any power to influence, the course of individual destiny or the drama of our hermetically personal consciousness. We have suffered a paralysis or eclipse of imagination before the nightmare of history in this age. Hence, we cannot imagine a fictional rationale in which events might be interpreted meaningfully in relation to the self. Our only recourse seems to be to fantasize the feelings of dislocation which obsess the self, or project images which convey, however incoherently, our sense of moral and emotional trivialization in the face of events.

Of the Black Humor writers whose work represents some expression of, or adjustment to, this dilemma, Donald Barthelme is in many ways the most interesting be-

cause he has the talent and intelligence occasionally to overcome its worst effects. A few stories in both his first volume, *Come Back, Dr. Caligari*, and this new book brilliantly demonstrate the power of sheer creative imagination to make the vital connection between satire and the social world. Barthelme's recurrent theme is precisely the trivialization of contemporary life and consciousness, and in these few stories he is able to dramatize his sense of that trivialization within the context of living fact and event which created it. But there is a vast distance between the stories which succeed in this way and the many others which are victimized by the fallacy of imitative form, in which dislocation is expressed through dislocation, and trivialization through trivia, to the



amusement and edification of nobody. These stories strike one as exercises in free association and automatic writing or as descriptions of bad dreams jotted down in the middle of the night for the benefit of one's analyst, and some of them sound as though they had been begun in the hope that of their own accord, through the sheer act of being written, they would eventually discover their subject and meaning.

Reading them is like finding oneself adrift in a sea of orbiting psychic garbage. Punctured beer cans, potato peelings, gnawed apple cores, squashed toothpaste tubes, stringy hanks of some dubious-looking viscous material float around and seemingly through one, always in the same fixed relation to oneself and everything else, and always somehow impenetrable because one is so completely penetrated by them. The stories are quite literally verbal immersions in dreck, the evacuated crud and muck of contemporary life, and they very effectively dramatize the sensations of being suffocated and shat upon and generally soiled and despoiled in soul and mind which accompany our daily experience of contemporary life. But they do not dramatize the cultural, political, or historical circumstances

which give rise to these sensations, nor do they end in a satirical or even a specific thematic formulation. Everything is offered in dead pan and with the mechanical iterativeness of items recited from a grocery list. Everything is offered, but somehow finally nothing is given.

The effect is actually very much like that of some of the New Wave films which introduce the viewer to an experience through a process of such total saturation in trivial details that it is often impossible to tell which detail or episode is supposed to be more important than some other, hence impossible to detect the thematic principle which finally binds the details together into meaning. One always suspects the artist of suggesting that he does not really know what he intends the depicted experience to mean, and so will leave it to us to decide for ourselves. In such a case, we are obliged, as Virginia Woolf once said, to do the artist's imagining for him, and while that may be a kindness to him, it is no help whatever to the cause of art.

Barthelme appears to be indictable on the same charge. Over and over in his stories he seems to be inviting us to take over the job of bringing into focus some idea which has eluded his powers of imaginative resolution. For example, in this new volume the story called "Edward and Pia" apparently has to do with an American expatriate and his Scandinavian mistress and the emptiness of their existence in Europe. The characters move apathetically through a horizontal succession of experiences, none of which is distinguished from any other in the slightest way, presumably because they are all equally without meaning and value. We learn that Edward and Pia went to Sweden, that Pia was pregnant, that in London they had seen *Marat/Sade* at the Aldwych Theater, that Edward and Pia walked the streets of Amsterdam and were hungry, that they went to the cinema to see an Eddie Constantine picture, that on Sunday Edward went to the bakery and bought bread, that Edward and Pia went to Berlin on the train, that Edward received a letter from London that Edward looked in the window of the used-radio store and it was full of used radios, that Edward put his hands on Pia's breasts, that the nipples were the largest he had ever seen. Then he counted his money.

Drawing by Leonard Baskin

He had two hundred and forty crowns. And so on and on and on.

All this is undoubtedly redolent of the trivialization of life in our time, and it may well be an attempt to say something about the form of spiritual death that accompanies the atrophy of all sane responses to life and all hopes of finding causal relationships within experience. But it comes through most clearly as an example of imagination succumbing to the trivia which is its material.

There may even be some justice in the thought that such benumbed recitations of detail are intended to be viewed as if they were being enacted under the outraged eye of the cosmos, and we are meant to hear rumbling behind it all the distant thunder of the archangelic armies advancing to bring down upon us the terrible wrath of God. But as Auden saw, even during such a cosmic occurrence as the crucifixion, dogs go placidly on with their doggy life, and "the expensive delicate ship that must have seen

something amazing," the fall of Brueghel's Icarus into the sea, "had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on."

It would appear that the cosmic and the apocalyptic, whether in art or in life, cannot be dramatized directly, cannot meaningfully stand alone. They can finally be understood only in terms of their simple and probably ironical relationship to the doggy life and the very real people sailing away on that ship. It is the task of fiction continually to reaffirm this relationship. Or, in an age such as ours, fiction may be obliged to reinvent it. For between the crucifixion and the doggy life, between our grandiose visions of doom and the specific creature experiences which embody them, there now lies a chasm which only the best talent and intelligence can hope to bridge. It takes little of either simply to say that the chasm is there and then to laugh at its existence. We know it is there, and the knowledge has long ago ceased to amuse.

to defend himself against the publication of a book like *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone*. (Almost every good writer is capable of writing a bad book, but a disillusioning perusal usually intervenes between writing and publication.)

The new novel purports to tell the story of a famous Negro actor called Leo Proudhammer, and the infamous old trick is used of giving him a heart attack and then telling most of the story in flashbacks. Born and bred in Harlem, with all its attendant horrors, Leo migrates to the Village; from there to the experimental stage; from there to the Big Time. He is accompanied through the early stages of his pilgrimage by an older and adored brother called Caleb; through the later stages by an unprejudiced though Kentuckian white girl called Barbara. He has an incestuous affair with his brother, but loses him to the beguilements of a sappy Christ. He loves Barbara, though mainly as a friend, but eventually falls into the arms of a Negro boy-militant, and ends the book with resolutions to join the black power movement.

No lack of material, then; no lack, either, of those driving emotions about violent public events which are said by some critics to be half the battle. Yet this is a book which lacks, above everything else, the faintest penetration from real life and real feeling. It is a wan stereotype, mournfully plodding from one hack convention to the next. We get every type in the book, from the Negro militant to the Negro preacher, from the phony liberal to the bold bohemian, from the stogy to the lost. Leo calls Barbara "Princess"; Barbara has a tendency to call any man "kind sir." History enters in this familiar scalp-tingling form:

Then I saw she had been crying. Some of the other ladies were standing on the porch. We looked down at the newspaper. Well, we understood that the war was over; for a long time, that was all that we understood. Hiroshima and Nagasaki, two cities we had never heard of, had been leveled with single, unprecedented bombs.

Public figures make gestures from the wings in this familiar manner: "Oh. This is from Marlon — you do know him?" "Oh yes. The friend of my youth." "I think that he really *does* want you to get well. He wants *everyone* to get well." There

Don't Go Tell It on the Mountain

by Philip Toynbee

A familiar criticism of modern English novels is that they seem etiolated, even emasculated. This may take the form of a certain pale gentility, but much more often of a sweating febrility, a meretricious violence, a desperate pretense of desperation. The trouble is this form of criticism implies or says that life in welfare England has become altogether too tame and tepid. Nothing *happens* here anymore. And the places where things used to happen to the English — all those hot outposts of Empire — are no longer accessible to us in their old material-providing roles.

I have never been much impressed by this type of criticism, believing that the dramas, tragedies, and joys of any private life provide more than enough material for a true writer. Indeed I have always felt that it is the opposite condition which is more to be feared. The writer who has seen and suffered too much from public events may find himself paralyzed by his own rage or misery. Or he may simply find that he has no instruments to

deal with these enormities. How many nearly adequate books emerged from the German camps? Not more than half a dozen at the most.

All of which is a preliminary to the reluctant judgment that James Baldwin's latest novel is a remark-

**Tell Me How Long
the Train's Been Gone**
by James Baldwin
(Dial, \$5.95)

ably bad one. And I know enough of Baldwin to know that the badness of this book needs more than the usual and obvious explanation for bad writing. He has shown, above all in his essays and autobiographies, that he has the talent to write well. He is also a man who has thought hard, deeply, and painfully, not only about the situation which he shares with all American Negroes, but also about his special task and problems as a Negro writer. In the course of writing so much — and much of it so well — he must surely have acquired enough self-criticism

is an endless violence of language which burns itself out within the first thirty pages. The narrative style totters between the inarticulate-fraught-with-significance to "children erupted, like beautiful doomed flowers." There are long conversations between all the characters about the color problem.

Grotesquely enough, what this book sharply recalled to me was certain English novels of the thirties — I wrote one of them myself — in which members of the well-padded left-wing middle class tried to express their sardonic and embittered contempt for the society which had given them suck. A grotesque comparison indeed, for Baldwin was born into an oppressed, despised, and humiliated minority, and has experienced all the pains, rages, and wry triumphs of which he writes.

If he had written nothing before this, and if I had not known that the author shares his origins with his hero, I would have come to the very simple conclusion that Baldwin might be an honest man but that he hadn't the talent to be an honest writer. (The worn-out and vulgar conventions of the book are a dishonest *means*, whatever the passion behind them.) But since I have read several other books by Baldwin, and even talked to him once for an hour or two, I know that he is not only an honest man but a man who

has learned how to express himself with honesty and originality; the two words mean much the same in this context. (I also know that he is a very funny man, though the humor of his present novel is abysmal.)

So I come back to my first conclusion, which is that Baldwin's raw-skinned pilgrimage through racist America has been too painful and enraging for his talent to encompass it. Overwhelmed by his own feelings he has collapsed into a sort of imitative jabbering. Stunned by ex-

periences which are too hideously real, he has retreated into the most effective of all unrealities, the unreality of the ham novel. If this interpretation is a true one, or nearly a true one, or partially a true one then Baldwin's talent has become another victim of the white racists. Let's hope that he can now contrive to nurse his rage into the right channels — which means that it must cut new channels for itself. He has enough talent to achieve this infinitely difficult task.

Micawber and Family

by Theodore Solotaroff

We seem to be in the middle of a literary season in which the autobiographical impulse is as catching as a virus. In recent months there have been, for example, *The Double Helix*, *Making It*, *North Toward Home*, *Stop-Time*, and *The Armies of the Night*, books of varying purposes and qualities but whose lines of inquiry rely heavily on self-documentation. Meanwhile, the contemporary novel has been taking on more and more subjective cargo as the realism of character and place gives way to the spontaneities of improvisation and fantasy, and contact with the world flows mainly across the arc of the novelist's obsessions.

Why there should be this sudden traffic in the revelations and imagery of the self is anybody's guess. Mine is that the faith in common, objective experience, in what one might call certified public reality, has reached an all-time low. This has opened the way to the belief that the only truths worth communicating about human affairs are those perceived in a personal, even idiosyncratic way, the more candid the point of view, the more unconditioned and therefore valid the report.

Regularly conned as we all are by the agents and media of public reality, which is already difficult enough to grasp as it is, it is not surprising that writers should fall back on personal candor as the ground of truth. Autobiography gives direction to the enterprise, and witnessing, in both senses of the word, confession, and other modes of individual testimony are brought to bear. Directly behind cant, writ-

ers seem to be saying, lies the truth. Although such writing often develops its own cant, a ready esteem for the offensive and daring, the aberrant and perverse, no one loses readers on that count since it then ministers to the kind of psychic voyeurism which, thanks to pop psychiatry, we confuse with insight.

All of this is prologue to my admiration for V. S. Pritchett's *A Cab at the Door*, the best 250-odd pages of autobiographical writing that I know of by a living author. What makes it so good is that Pritchett is, first of all, a great writer: a master of the natural, direct style, charged with imagination and integrated by a quietly personal tone. As with Thoreau or Shaw, open any page and you are immediately in touch with a man. Or as Pritchett has said of E. M. Forster, when he begins to speak the machine stops.

A Cab at the Door is written with plenty of candor, but it is also written with something even better, which is artistic tact. Reversing the customary procedure in contempo-

The Writers

John W. Aldridge, professor of English at the University of Michigan, is currently preparing biographical and critical studies of George Orwell and Norman Mailer.

Philip Toynbee's most recent novel is *Strangers and Brothers*.

Theodore Solotaroff is editor of *The New American Review*.

Stanley Hoffmann is a professor of government at Harvard.

Robert Bingham is on the staff of the *New Yorker*.

Elisabeth Stevens has written criticism for numerous periodicals and recently completed her first novel.

Edward Weeks, Phoebe Adams, and Herbert Kupferberg contribute regularly to the magazine.

A Cab at the Door

by V. S. Pritchett
(Random House, \$5.95)

rary autobiography, Pritchett places at the center of his memoir a solid and deliciously detailed commentary on lower-middle-class English life in the first two decades of the century, based on his family, educational, and early business experience; meanwhile he modestly lays around

In hope of doing each other some good

Kodak

,000 persons of influence

In hope of doing each other some good on a cold, rain-swept morning at Atlantic City in March, we in company with two other equally well known technology corporations entertained 7,000 of the most influential people in the country, all wearing convention badges of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. This pallid appellation identifies professionals who tell teachers what to teach and how. The parents dutifully send the kids to school, trusting that these people will know why.

The three of us put on a big multi-media show for them. Not the least of the media was the art of the dance: competent teeny-bopping by youthful personnel from Atlantic City High School helped convey the message that the li'l red schoolhouse had been knocked down by a bulldozer and is not about to be rebuilt, not even in spirit.

To our guests this was hardly news. They understand our position. They can see that we, too, want to be influential in a large way but have only technology—in which we have placed all our faith—to win us a sense of participation.

A tour of the exhibits at the convention was reassuring. Photography, the technology in which we happen to specialize, need no longer plead hard. It is accepted. It shows the child the great and real world direct, not just the way the teacher sees the world. The machinery which this technology brings into the schoolhouse now gets less in the way also, having been recently shrunk physically. On exactly how to use the film image, our powerful friends have not yet endorsed any one line of sales talk. Standardization seems far ff. Bless them.

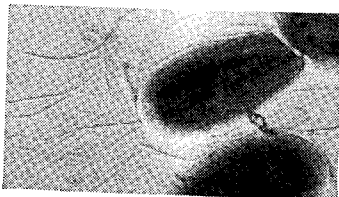
Activated sludge, a fascinating subject

We take water from Lake Ontario and put it back in the Genesee River after we are through with it. Right now we are building a \$6.5 million plant further to improve the quality of the discharge. We are going to give the water back sparkling clear and fit for trout. Biggest voluntary project of private industry in support of the state's pure water program, says the Governor.

- If the factory were closed, the benefits of the light-sensitive materials made there forgotten, and the people sent far away, the quality of the water in the Genesee River would further improve. There is a better way.

- Distillation purifies water the most. Some day nuclear energy may be cheap enough to distill half a billion gallons of water a day. But the heat evolved might change the climate. Too bold for now.

- Passing through artificial membranes also does a good job. Plant to do it might run a few hundred times the cost of any other purification plant on earth. Imprudent.



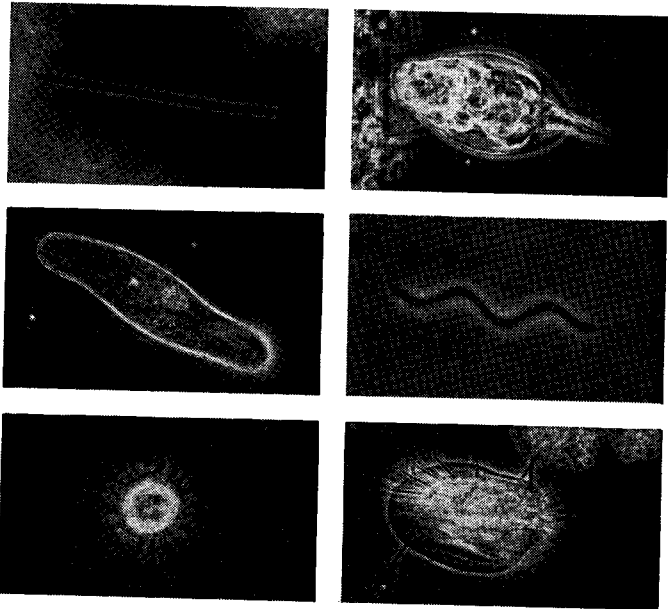
- Better at the job than any passive artificial membrane is the natural one that separates the outside world from the active and incredibly efficient and adaptable chemical plant inside a bacterium.

No body knows how to build such a plant, nor is there any need. Under foot everywhere and awaiting the chance to flourish are abundant prototypes in whatever design is required to disassemble any compound presented, including phenol and other "germicides." Poison for one nurtures another.

- The public (including millions of healthy, satisfied owners of septic tanks) equates all bacteria with disease, failing

to understand what a mess there would be if they were all wiped out forever.

- Bacteria serve as food for organisms of more complex form, which are eaten in turn by other forms, and so up a chain. All are so small that one sees with the naked eye only



Members of the team on a certain day

brown broth, an abomination almost by definition. Yeasts and other fungal cells may also be present to compete with the bacteria for the nutrients we wish to get rid of. Except for certain bacteria at the bottom of the chain, all the organisms need oxygen. Supply that in abundance and life is lived in the tank at high pitch. Thus are wastes burned off biologically. Steps are taken to make sure the organisms remain behind when the cleansed water leaves.

- The chain of life that cleanses streams was working long before vertebrates and factories evolved. Engineers just make the process more efficient.

- Activated sludge systems like the one we are building are designed and operated by engineers who wish the biologists would get interested and clear up the mysteries of the day-to-day and hour-to-hour population changes in the tank. Predictability and clear, firm specifications are wanted.

- Biologists are well aware that many mysteries are there to be unraveled, but it's hard to establish a scientific position on a foundation of factory effluvia.

- Our management has committed us to share happily any technology we develop as the plant progresses.

Sit down and be comforted

Try writing down exactly why one upholstered chair or sofa feels good and another does not. Better yet, go to a furniture showroom and ask to see some items that have been built with a new polyester product of ours that we have named "EKTAFILL." You may not care deeply why a new and ingenious concept for bonding together layers of fiber of different diameter promotes a just-right combination of support, softness, and resiliency along with rugged resistance to the passage of the years and responsiveness to the realities of furniture design and production. Just sit down and assess the results. Subjectively, please.

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the rim the account of his own troubled development as a person and of his inchoate intentions as an artist.

The effect is a beautifully sustained priority of interests in which the depiction of concrete social conditions and forces, of manners and mores stands by itself as a portrait of an age and a class, while serving as the ground that outlines the formation of his character. This not only places the emphasis where most readers would wish to see it — on the way things were rather than how they felt, on the individual life seen less through its accidents than as common experience — but also enables Pritchett, both as writer and as subject, to exist naturally and unselfconsciously among his interests and feelings. The result is a splendid montage of persons and places fixed in their individual being, casting their representative light, and suggesting the evolving personality of the author through his relations to them. By this kind of artistic strategy, mediating deftly between figure and ground, an autobiography turns into a life.

In his criticism, no less than in his fiction or travel writing, Pritchett's great gift has been for characterization, the overflow of relevant, vivid, surprising detail, that actualizes a person, a place, a book. Pritchett among the hallowed dead of literature is like Odysseus in Hades: a little of the blood of his critical vitality, and even as spectral a figure as Richardson immediately begins to speak again and have his being.

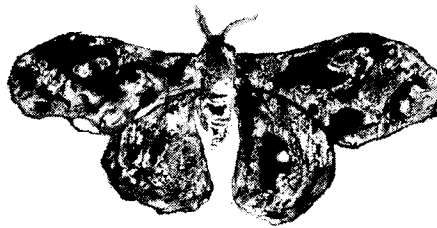
Still, one is unprepared for the dramatic sketches of the Pritchett family, and the full, dominant portrait of his father. Moreover, if Pritchett brings to his autobiography the gifts and aims of a social novelist, he also belonged to a family that seems especially designed for this enterprise: a veritable treasure trove of individual types. Thanks to the adventurism of his father, whose field of wild oats was commerce — “one of nature's salesmen,” as Pritchett delicately puts it, “he was even more one of nature's buyers” — the family lived in a good many different places and circumstances, one step ahead of its creditors. And since the boy was regularly being farmed out to relatives, he led a more picaresque youth than David Copperfield.

His formative influences began

with the austerities of the north and the laxities of the south.

On my mother's side they were all pagans, and she a rootless London pagan, a fog worshiper, brought up on the folklore of the North London streets; on my father's side they were harsh, lonely, God-ridden sea or country people who had been settled along the Yorkshire coasts or among its moors and fells for hundreds of years. There is enough in the differences between North and South to explain the battles and uncertainties of a lifetime.

So it proved, at least in the first twenty years recounted in *A Cab at the Door*. Family crises sent him frequently into his paternal grandfather's household. A man who had pulled himself out of poverty with one mighty lunge from the army and bricklaying into the ministry, he “looked like a sergeant-major who did not drink.” His guides were Carlyle and Ruskin as well as the Gospel; a somewhat mellowed authoritarian by Pritchett's time, he urged his iron aspirations on his grandson, and whatever will to



learning and self-improvement and independence that Pritchett was to live out began with the influence of this solitary and hardheaded Dissenter. There was also his great-uncle Arthur, a cabinetmaker in York, who had literally taught himself to read with Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* and had made himself into an amateur naturalist and antiquarian. From these two resolute figures and their industrious households, one gets a feeling for the powerful religious and economic forces that had created mobility at long last in the working class and enabled it to make its first significant inroads into the life of culture.

Still, there was a long way to go, and Pritchett speaks of his grandfather as being like an immigrant, so strange to him was his place in the middle class. Exhausted by his early climb and devitalized by the vocation that had enabled it, he was eventually dominated by his fastidious and stuffy wife and by his own dream of status. Pritchett's father inherited the dream and the

fastidiousness; in full flight from the rigidity and repressiveness of the minister's household, he became a premature gentleman, addicted to fashions and comforts that his exaggerated sense of opportunity and his superficial resourcefulness never quite earned for him and that had to be purchased at his family's expense. A softheaded businessman, a fantasist, his mobility was mostly circular, now tilting upward toward respectability, now downward into sordidness. His religious upbringing led him into various denominations, which he tried on for style, and eventually his obstinacy, expansiveness, and self-righteousness found an abiding stay in the teachings of Mary Baker Eddy, the “other woman” in his life. His relation with his wife, as Pritchett puts it, was “like a marriage of the rich and the poor.” A sly, imaginative ex-shopgirl, she vaguely followed with her four children in the turbulent wake of her husband's career, wryly singing to herself “At Trinity Church I met me doom.”

Needless to say, Pritchett grew up with deeply ambivalent feelings toward this flashy and unreliable father who still dominated his family in good Victorian fashion (“Until 1918,” Pritchett remarks, “England was a club of energetic and determined parricides”). Early on, he can only helplessly accept his father's nutty glory: “We have no desire to see things like the pantomime or Peter Pan; other children see such shows, but we prefer to send Father there on our behalf; it will be one more chapter of his fantastic life.” He wears cut-down striped morning trousers to another one of his slum schools, imbibes his father's myopic view of reality, even takes for a time to Christian Science. “No one else had (I was sure) our dark adventures. We were a race apart, abnormal but proud of our stripes, longing for the normality we saw around us.”

But eventually, he found he had his own singularities to cultivate. The first good teacher he encountered led him directly into literature and painting, a deviation which his father, hot for emulation, met with open contempt and secret jealousy. So began Pritchett's long struggle to work himself free of his father's ego, from commerce and religion, from the family mania for “getting on.” Visits to his more stable and

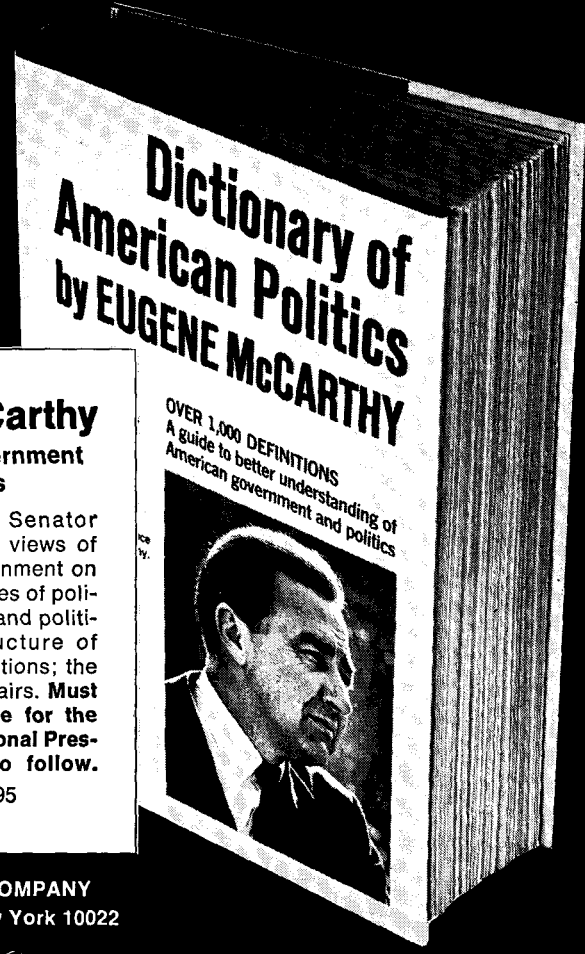
Drawing by Leonard Baskin

enlightened relatives helped. So did his busy life in the streets and schools of London and environs, a boy's first line of escape from a neurotic home.

His family settles for a time in Dulwich, Ruskin's neighborhood, and this patron saint of lower-class aspirations beckons him on. The great novelists also begin to offer him some solid ground. One day in the peace and quiet of the countryside, a sense of purpose forms: "Money would have nothing to do with it. . . . The important thing was to be alone . . . and always walking and moving away." Prescient but still sad. He remarks on his poor performance in school, on his being "self-burdened," on "the dirty cunning and flightiness of my priggish nature" — that is to say, on being his father's son and suffering from two generations of the Non-conformist vertigo. That he will grow up to be V. S. Pritchett is less surprising at this point than the fact that he is growing up at all.

Yet his brother, who adored his father and therefore remained suitably dull, springs to life once he leaves home and returns from France a success in business. Such is the resilience and toughness of the human stuff. After four years spent in the relative sanity of the leather trade — here the book rises to the most sustained and luminous level of social observation — Pritchett is ready at nineteen to begin his own life in France. His father puts him on the boat train, still self-importantly fussing over him, the elder Pritchett's portly, almost sumptuous manner the mark of the dreamlike appetite that had seduced his own father and perverted himself. Exhausted by their anxieties, hatreds, conflicts, Pritchett has little to say to him; they watch two Italians, father and son, passionately embracing each other.

It is a moment of pure revelation: the profits and losses of the family's long climb into the middle class registered by the contrast. In his modest, unsentimental way, Pritchett quickly passes on to other matters and feelings, but this detail in its setting leaves behind for the reader, as does the memoir as a whole, a very clear sense of the difference between writing as self-display and writing that enables the self, through the tactics and tact of art, to suggest its meanings.



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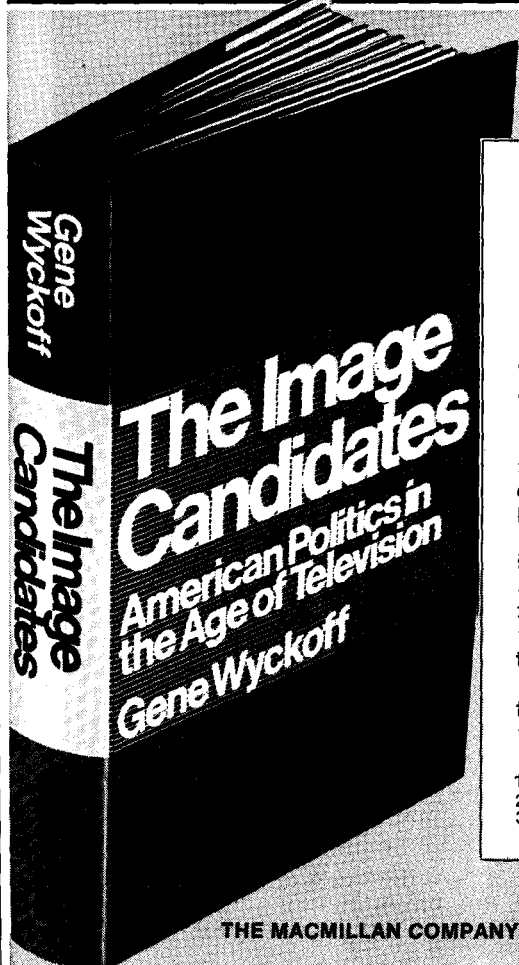
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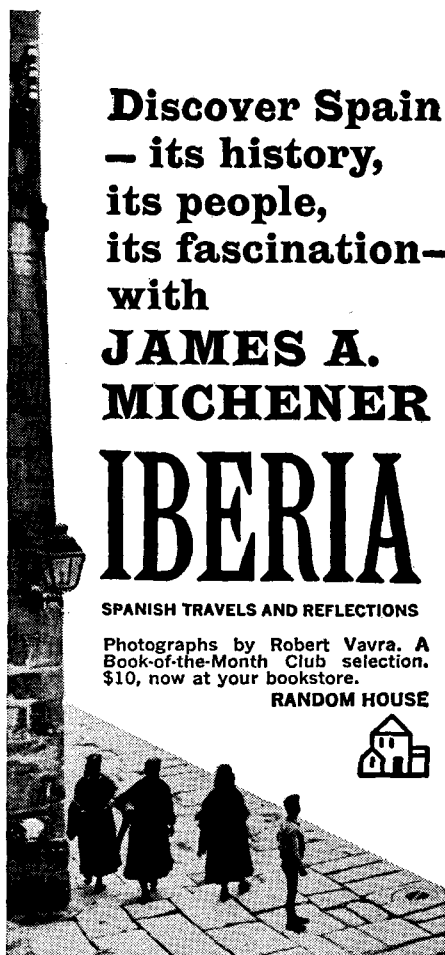
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Europe's Vicious Circle

by Stanley Hoffmann

The latest book written by Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, the brilliant and versatile founder and editor of the Paris weekly *L'Express*, is neither an intellectual nor a literary achievement; it is a sociological phenomenon. Its enormous success in Western Europe shows that Servan-Schreiber has, once again, known how to tackle the right subject at the right moment. After years of experts' discussions on the so-called technology gap between the United States and Western Europe, after many fragmentary debates about the benefits and drawbacks of American investments in Europe, after De Gaulle's charges that linked such investments with America's balance of payments deficit, and Gaston Defferre's indictment of the Gaullist regime for allowing the economic take-over of France by the United States while waging a lonely fight against American political imperialism, the time had come for a blunt,

appeal to Western Europeans to meet the American challenge not by restrictive measures, but by a sort of collective political determination to reorganize European social relations, management habits, education systems, and political institutions in order to become competitive again. Nothing short of a federal European government capable of defining and applying a unified industrial policy, of encouraging the transnational concentration of industrial firms, of giving massive state aid to industry (especially for research and development) will suffice.

Servan-Schreiber's book is both a sharp description and a demonstration of the European predicament. It is at its best in its critical passages: when he denounces the sclerosis of social structure and education in the nations of Western Europe; when he points out the fiasco of purely national attempts at competing with American firms (as in the case of computers) and the tribulations of purely cooperative undertakings between Western European states (as in the cases of the Concorde airplane and the space program); when he criticizes the absence of a sense of industrial dynamism not only in the French right but also in the French left, with its dislike of competition, its attachment to bureaucracy, and its "opium of revolution." Servan-Schreiber may be right in saying that America's challenge is that of reason, science, and organization. But the remedies he suggests indicate that reason, science, and organization by themselves do not determine solutions to problems that go far beyond management techniques and involve value choices and deep changes in social behavior.

The real puzzle — to which he does not address himself — is why the resurgent European nations have failed to meet the American challenge. The familiar answer, so dear to Jean Monnet and George Ball, the excessively small size of the nation-state, is only part of the story. Sweden and Japan, discussed by Servan-Schreiber in two brief appendices, have met the challenge. The answer must be sought at a

The American Challenge by Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber (Atheneum, \$6.95)

readable, and popular analysis of America's industrial and technological challenge to Europe.

Servan-Schreiber has put together data and analyses from a large number of sources, including OECD reports, studies by American and European scholars, and memoranda from American research institutes. He has the talent for presenting his facts in striking, often sensational fashion: American industry in Europe might well become the third industrial power in the world — after the United States and the U.S.S.R.; nine tenths of America's investments in Europe are financed by European resources — "We pay them so that they can buy us out." He shows that those investments are mainly in strategic — that is, the most advanced — sectors, especially electronics, and that the short-term advantages for Europe would be offset by the long-term disadvantages of a quasi-colonial domination. Yet the main message of the book is an

much deeper level — where one also finds some of the reasons why the nation-state has been so resilient and the progress of Western European integration so disappointing (for General de Gaulle is not the only, or even the main, factor here). *There is no European sense of purpose in the new industrial age*; as long as this sense has not appeared, within and across borders, the remedies recommended by Servan-Schreiber will be either irrelevant or beyond reach, for we are dealing here with issues that are not easily fixable by governmental or supranational fiat.

First, there is no agreement among Western Europeans concerning the type of society that should be created out of the present system of managed capitalism. Servan-Schreiber's ideal is America — he quotes from J. K. Galbraith's analysis of the "techno-structure" in the new industrial state with approval. But the fact is that many Europeans, among the intellectuals and the young especially, continue to object to the ideal of the "affluent society," in which social justice, as they see it, is merely a haphazard by-product of the rate of economic growth, and the workers are "integrated" through powerful unions convinced of the supreme virtues of productivity; they want to build a different kind of social order (although they are far from agreeing on a model); their reaction is best summarized by the remark of Jean-Marie Domenach, the director of the French monthly *Esprit*: "Why fight the American system outside, if it is in order to adopt it inside?" They want to preserve, or to recreate, a separate European identity, one less dominated by values of economic rationality and "cost effective" management, by the conviction that the proper means define the right ends. They would prefer either a consensus around a different ideal, or a society altogether less wedded to consensus and more geared to conflict and contest.

Second, even if Europeans, within their separate nation-states, should come to recognize the American model as the best — even for the realization of their goals of social justice, democratization, and participation — the passage from the national sphere of action to the federal one would still depend on whether the separate governments could agree on a joint political role for Europe in the world. For a pooling of wealth, wel-

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The Triumph, a novel by John Kenneth Galbraith demonstrates among many other

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Edward Weeks, *The Atlantic*

Three chapters of **Fong and the Indians** by Paul Theroux are appearing in this month's *Atlantic*, eloquent testimony to this young and gentle satirist's talent.

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fare, and technology on the scale demanded by Servan-Schreiber presupposes a *political* agreement on the purposes to which the common goods would be used — that is, an agreement on the common good; and a joint willingness to entrust a federal government with the definition of the common good is not likely to emerge as long as the national definitions are either as far apart or as confused as they are now.

Finally, and most profoundly, the reason for this unwillingness and for the incapacity to overcome the domestic uncertainties about a new kind of society is the very resilience of those obsolete forms of political and social organization that Servan-Schreiber denounces. If these forms were more flexible, less incapable of reform, there would be fewer Europeans distrustful of the capitalist ideal (for to them, capitalism means the old European, not the new American industrial, state); it is a vicious circle. If these patterns were less deeply rooted, even though they fail to meet the demands of the new industrial age, then purely national reforms could eliminate them, or national governments could delegate the task to a supranational agency. But the present drama in Europe, the reason why the American challenge is resented but not met, lies in the following contradiction: there are, on the one side, certain rigidities (in management, in education, in the separation between science, industry, and research) that have become massive obstacles to both economic and social progress, and also the resistance to change of all those who have benefited for so long from those obsolete structures. There are, on the other side, all those who have been so deeply conditioned by those structures that, despite their hostility to them, they find it hard either to conceive of anything really different, or to go about trying to change them in the bureaucratic and inefficient ways which are the only ones they know, yet which perpetuate evil or distort change. The trauma of educational reform in Western Europe is exemplary: the old system collapses, but the governments are unable to impose a new one, because they have no clear idea of what it should be, and they are caught between the conservatism of the majority of the challenged educators and the negative revolt — sullen for most, violent for some —

of the students. Servan-Schreiber is right to call the problem political; he is wrong to confuse so often political with governmental. It is, as the French would say, a problem of civilization — of collective imagination and will.

In order to get to the nirvana of the postindustrial age, Western European societies would have to know how to get beyond the bourgeois age; for the time being they live,

prosperously but uneasily, between its impressive and vinelike grip and attempts — sometimes short-ranged, sometimes desperate — at loosening its hold and redirecting its branches. It is not surprising that American industry, untroubled by Europe's past and by any doubts about purpose and future, should have known how to move in, and thus left the tied Europeans torn between admiration and resentment.

Let's Revitalize the Classics Now!

by Robert Bingham

It has become fashionable among the so-called literary sophisticates of our day to speak with contumely of the Rev. Dr. Thomas Bowdler (1754–1825). Bowdler, it will be recalled, was the editor who sought to save no less a treasure than the poetry of William Shakespeare from falling into public desuetude by causing to be published, in 1818, an edition of the bard's plays in which, as Bowdler explained, "those words and expressions are omitted which cannot with propriety be read aloud in a family." So far as I can determine, no plans have been made to celebrate the sesquicentennial of the feat. But to those who can only scoff at a delicacy that would spare maiden ladies the discomfiture of blushing, I submit that one day Bowdler will be accorded a worthy place in the literary pantheon as a fitting recognition of a contribution to our culture that knows no parallel in history — and one, moreover, that has far-reaching significance for our own times.

What, it may be asked, can Bowdler possibly teach us today? Only a madman would propose the expunction of any scatological or Fescennine material from books in an age when the ingenuity of even the foulest mind apparently cannot produce salacity that the courts will find devoid of redeeming social value and when the reading public's erotic imagination, glutted to the point of surfeit, cries out for ever more rarefied titillation. The modern reader demands more smut, not less. But let us examine Bowdler's contribution dispassionately. Then it will become clear that the essence of bowdlerization, as we call the

process, is nothing more nor less than the revitalization of a masterpiece by means of responsible emendation so that it may conform more acceptably to tastes and mores entirely at variance with those which prevailed, through no fault of the author, when the work was first committed to paper. For us, then, the solution, once grasped, is so simple as to seem almost laughable. Bowdler took the dirty words out; we must put them in!

Indeed, there is no time to be wasted. It is not difficult to foresee that even a novel as unduly explicit in its delineation of the appetites of the flesh as M. Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* is threatened with literary oblivion among readers whose concepts of what Frenchwomen do for amusement have been formed by Mlle. Réage's *Story of O*. Just how did Emma and the young clerk pass their time while sequestered in that carriage with drawn shades whose driver was ordered to "keep going" aimlessly around Paris all one afternoon? The public expects to be told, and it must be told if the novel is not to be dismissed as archaically prim.

And now that Mr. Mailer has shown us what is really involved in the maturation of an American boy during the process of hunting and killing a bear, how many modern readers can be expected to have the patience to work their way through the prototype of this genre, in which Mr. Faulkner unfortunately neglected to include even one episode involving two of his male characters in a sleeping bag? The need for remedy is urgent. The classics must be brought up to date *now*.

For this reason, it gives me satisfaction to be able to announce that at least a small beginning has been made in the great task of keeping our heritage alive. And I am specially gratified that this beginning has been made among members of the academic profession, who are all too often wrongly accused of ignoring the imperatives of popular culture.

Thanks to the generosity of one of the farsighted philanthropic foundations, a modest grant has been made available to me for the purpose of conducting a seminar that serves the special scholarly needs of qualified Ph.D. candidates in the heretofore unrecognized discipline of hardcore pornography. Most of my students — attracted, I like to think, by my positive approach to this relatively new branch of comparative literature — have transferred from the University of California at Berkeley, where they gained valuable experience in the Free Speech Movement, and the enthusiasm with which they go about their work is infectious.

I should like to single out for special commendation two students whose projects may be illustrative of our entire undertaking. An especially imaginative young man, who expects to be leaving me next semester in order to take a position as technical adviser for the filming of Gore Vidal's *Myra Breckinridge*, has interlarded Melville's long essays on cetology with some graphic little scenes of 'tween-deck sodomy that should go far to relieve the tedium of *Moby Dick*. A young lady who has been functioning as my research assistant in the pornography seminar is preparing, under my tutelage, an unusual doctoral dissertation in the form of a complete revision of the works of Jane Austen. In my opinion, the new version of *Emma*, in which the rich possibilities of incest inherent in Miss Woodhouse's prolonged devotion to her invalid father are exploited to the full, will drive puritanical stuff like *Couples* right off the best-seller list the minute it appears.

And that, after all, is our goal. In the exalted tradition of Thomas Bowdler, we do not revise merely for the sake of revision but in order to render the great literature of the past truly popular with the general reading public of today. Surely there's no crime in that.

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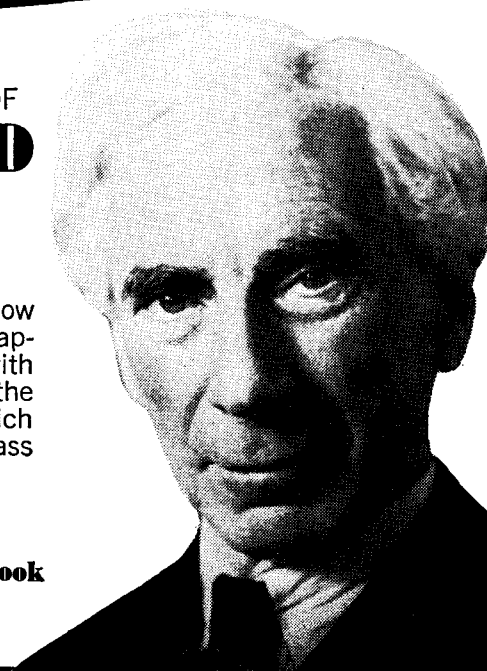
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The Peripatetic Reviewer

by Edward Weeks

A novelist born in Ireland who transplanted himself to the United States after a pause in Canada, Brian Moore attracted his first readers with *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne*, that poignant short novel about a spinster in Belfast which one critic praised for its "hypnotic plausibility." It took Mr. Moore about ten years to acquire sophistication in the new world; how well he has done so will be seen in his best book to date, *I Am Mary Dunne*, the July selection of the Literary Guild.

Mary Dunne, a feast for the eye at thirty-two, tells her story in the first person and on a day when she is in trouble. In her premenstrual period — she is starkly explicit about all her sex doings — Mary is neurotic and vulnerable; her mind is filled with self-doubt. In such a mood, what she calls her Mad Twin frequently gets the upper hand, trapping her in actions and confessions which leave her trembling and wretched. The most trivial irritant — a stranger accosting her as she leaves the beauty parlor on Madison Avenue, or the tainted gossip of an old friend at lunch — sends her off into a fit of reminiscence in which the novelist discloses the woman bare, guilty about her past, uncertain of her future, yet appealing because of her irrepressible spirit.

From the day when she ran away from Butchersville in Nova Scotia with her classmate Jimmy Phelan, Mary has been on the make. She was not in love with Jimmy, she thought he represented a meal ticket in Toronto, where she could be coached as an actress (Mary had won first prize in the Dominion Drama Festival in Halifax); but when they fetched up living on her salary in a sleazy furnished room, that gamble was lost. Jimmy, inept even at love-making, was left by the wayside when she caught the eye of "Hat" Bell, the Canadian war correspondent.

Hatfield Bell is the most likable man in the book, blond, competent, and distinguished in a careless way. He was a good deal older than Mary when she came into his life and more hard-used than she suspected. They were to have five years together;

after the divorces she moved with Hat to New York for his big job at *Life*, and when *Life* fired him because of his drinking, she was as loyal to him as a dissatisfied woman could be, helping with his cure until Terence Lavery, the charming English playwright, a year younger than herself, started her looking the other way. For all his good looks Hat was impotent, and Mary, puzzled, blamed this on herself until in her infatuation with Terence she found that she could return love.

The bright and the soiled strands of Mary's life have been skillfully shuttled: one sympathizes with her eagerness to get away from drabness, her impatience with the small gossip clique in Toronto; and one shares her feeling of inferiority, which she and her Canadian friends carry with them across the border: this comes out ironically in her luncheon with Janice and intolerably in the scene of abasement at the close. Mary will never forgive herself for not being more loyal to Hat, nor as an older woman will she ever be quite sure of her hold on Terence. In her struggle for self-possession she has qualms about her sanity, and so occasionally does the reader, not knowing what her inner resources may be. The trouble is the author has told us more about the early frigidity and later warmth of her love life than about how her mind works when she is otherwise occupied.

At the war's end Barbara Ward was the second in command of the

I Am Mary Dunne

by Brian Moore
(Viking, \$4.95)

The Lopsided World

by Barbara Ward
(Norton, \$3.95)

The Survival of the Fittest

by Pamela Hansford Johnson
(Scribner's, \$6.95)

The Right People

by Stephen Birmingham
(Little, Brown, \$10.00)

most knowledgeable magazine then published in English, *The Economist*, and the feelings of hope and exhilaration which she experienced as she saw the new world restore the old with the Marshall Plan and the "Point Four" programs of 1949 have lived with her ever since as the most humane, intelligent way of reconciling the vast discrepancies on our planet, where 20 percent of the world's population controls 80 percent of the world's wealth. I think Miss Ward assimilates the living conditions, the needs of a new developing nation faster than anyone else I know. Her long residence in and her close study of the poorer countries in Asia and Africa qualify her to speak as an authority, and the appeal which she makes in her new short book, *The Lopsided World*, is addressed to the pocket nerve quite as much as to the heart.

Miss Ward realizes that most of us do not think about our planet as a community and that we Americans at the moment are in no mood to draw a comparison between the poor at home, about whom we are greatly exercised, and the poor abroad, whom we have grown tired of aiding. How can we find the means for both? we ask, and Miss Ward thinks that a bad defense. If the Pentagon, she reminds us, asks for 50 billion for a new anti-missile system, we will buy it no matter how soon it may be obsolete — but the amount required to help the developing nations reach a peacekeeping stability comes a lot cheaper than that! She knows how long it takes to produce the "break-through" to modernization — with the richest continent in the world in our hands, it took us Americans eighty years — but she has seen the healthy beginnings, and they must go on. "Land settlement," she writes, "has turned the dark lands of the Mau Mau into a lively, growing Kikuyu farming area. Rural works and cooperatives have brought some stability to some of the world's most overcrowded farm lands in East Pakistan. Earlier land reforms seem to lessen the appeal of guerrillas to the Bolivian peasant just as, first in the 1870s and then again under General MacArthur, they have stabilized and enriched the Japanese countryside."

Miss Ward is aware of what happened in 1929 and 1930, when two thirds of the world's population sud-

denly found themselves earning less and buying less, and when, in nine months, world trade fell by two thirds. And so she would recall us to a vision which we once had, to a commitment which we cannot afford to lose. Her closing words are graphic: In a "world society which the astronaut strides round in 90 minutes — and science can blow up in 90 seconds . . . it is better to build and support the worldwide institutions — of peacekeeping, of development, of welfare — which in any society maintain the peace and in a nuclear society can prevent annihilation."

In *The Survival of the Fittest* Pamela Hansford Johnson sets out to tell the adventures and development of a small literary circle in London, beginning in their "wild life" in the 1930s and carrying them through the London blitz and the war and on into the atomic age, when with reputations and paunches expanded, they are ripe for a cultural visit to the Soviet Union. It is a leisurely, parochial novel, encumbered with too many minor characters, and it raises a very large doubt: are these people, these novelists and critics, with their petty feuds, really believable? Plausible novels about artists come readily to mind, *The Moon and Sixpence* and *The Horse's Mouth* being two of them; but I cannot recall a single novel about a poet or a fiction writer which left me believing in the hero's work.

I miss in *The Survival of the Fittest* the wit and the mischief which have brightened up so much of Miss Johnson's other work. The panorama of the story cannot help giving one the feeling of déjà vu. The rallies for Spain and the dejection when the Republic was defeated; the lethargy which preceded Chamberlain's and Runciman's appeasement of Hitler; the training of the fire wardens; the endurance of the blitz; the long separation from those captured by the Japanese — these are experiences which in the multiple retelling have lost immediacy and much of their emotion.

What keeps the story moving and our attention alert are the three central figures. Jo Upjohn, a Laborite who dabbles in short stories; his closest friend, Kit Mallings, the novelist-to-be; and Alison Petrie, who has scored an early success with her books and with whom they are

both in love. Jo is the kingpin and by far the most interesting; his pride and humility, the cross he bears in his invalid mother, and his unswerving devotion to Alison are the facets of a rare man. I think of Alison, perhaps erroneously, as the alter ego of Miss Johnson; and Kit, with his American triumph and his compulsive drinking, is clearly based on Dylan Thomas. Of the other literary prototypes in the book, Belphoebe is admittedly a character sketch of Dame Edith Sitwell and Mamonov of Mikhail Sholokhov. Indeed there are times when I wonder if the use of models may not have cramped the vivacity of this too long, too literal book.

When an author competes with himself, one of his books is bound to suffer. *The Right People* by Stephen Birmingham appears when "*Our Crowd*" is still being relished, and it does so at a disadvantage. Part of the fun of "*Our Crowd*" is that the hierarchy of the great Jewish families arrived at about the same time in the nineteenth century, most of them penniless; that they climbed the American ladder with incredible industry and speed; and having arrived at Fifth Avenue, that they segregated themselves into a tightly closed circle in which they lived with pomp, decorum, some of them with very good taste, and almost all of them with happiness. The bolder among them broke through the barricades erected by J. P. Morgan, and to a generation reared on Horatio Alger, this was good clean fun and a credit to the Statue of Liberty.

But when Mr. Birmingham comes courting *The Right People*, by which he means those gentiles whose ancestry, money, and distinction have put them in the top drawer, he has a much harder assignment. His families have no common takeoff as they did in "*Our Crowd*"; some of them date back before the Revolution; others, not necessarily the wealthiest, maintain their sovereignty with such discretion that they are not easy to write about. It was Mr. Birmingham's intent to describe the leaders in American society and the institutions they patronize in their home cities and country resorts. He knew there was snobbery involved, and he draws this distinction: "Older families are better people. Better people are nicer people. Newer people may be richer people than



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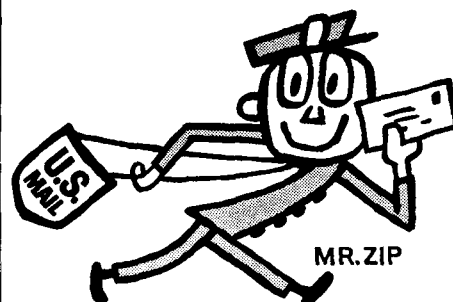
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older people. That doesn't matter. Ordinary Society people may get to be Real Society people one day only if they work at it."

His book came into being as a series of magazine articles written over a decade. I should say that Mr. Birmingham is least at ease in the older cities like Boston and Philadelphia (there are several inaccuracies about Boston which should have been caught: the Sedgwicks are not Old Boston, and the incomparable Abigail Homans is not in her seventies); his better pieces are concerned with the less rigid milieus like Washington, San Francisco, Palm Beach, and Palm Springs, where a parvenu with style and hospitality

has a good chance of breaking in. He has more fun with matriarchs like Mrs. Spreckels of San Francisco or an entrepreneur like Mrs. Cafritz of Washington than he does with a witty trueblood like Alice Longworth. He ignores the pedigrees of the Old South but does produce, tongue in cheek, the laborious genealogy of the Auchinclosses (who but Uncle Charles would ever want to know that much about albatrosses?). His mockery is more telling when he writes about the Knickerbocker Greys than when he tries to lump together the "St. Grottlesex Schools." The illustrations, many of them of lovely ladies, catch the eye without much affinity with the text.

ART

Dada and Son

by Elisabeth Stevens

An evening of pseudo-revolution in New York. "Bourgeois slob!" screamed one demonstrator. "Go to Schrafft's!" sneered another. The objects of the invective were à la mode art-establishment types arriving for the opening of the Museum of Modern Art's show "Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage."

If the protest lacked the bang of the old Dada "gestes" (New York demonstrators were held behind police lines and outnumbered by helmeted cops), the show at first glance looked unexplosive too. In the name of history, the museum had attempted to reduce Dada and surrealism from psychic explosions to a polite series of pops. In a 252-page exhibition catalogue (Museum of Modern Art: hardcover, \$9.95; paperbound, \$4.95), William S. Rubin, the curator of painting and sculpture, had written: "... art cannot be made from life alone, even less from particular psychological methodologies; more than anything else it is made from art."

Rubin's hobbyhorse is art as self-perpetuating history, and he has ridden it assiduously, gathering more than 300 works to illustrate his story of how Dada was baptized in Zurich in 1916, succeeded by surrealism in the early 1920s, and

ultimately transmuted to nourish such diverse later movements as abstract expressionism and pop. The chronology is copious, and some of the art is excellent. Duchamp's superintelligent creations introduce a Dada section that includes Picabia, Man Ray, Grosz, Richter, and Schwitters. A fine selection of de Chirico's stands in precursor position to a big-name surrealist gathering that includes Max Ernst, Yves Tanguy, René Magritte, Dali, Miró, and Picasso. A final "heritage" section includes the post-1942 European exiles such as André Masson and Roberto Matta as well as Arshile Gorky ("the last important artist to be associated with Surrealism"), a smattering of abstract expressionism (Rothko, Gottlieb, Newman, Pollock), and a pinch of pop art (Oldenburg, Johns, Kienholz).

Art history is necessary for attribu-

Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage

The Museum of Modern Art
March 27 to June 9, 1968
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
July 16 to September 8, 1968
The Art Institute of Chicago
October 19 to December 8, 1968

tions and records. Art history can be illuminating, even *interesting*. But the monothematic devotion of Rubin and many other art historians and critics to the idea of art as an inevitable and progressive *process* of influences and counterinfluences drearily and mechanically grinding out new styles is visually deadening and intellectually oppressive. Under such an approach, the influential and the new are valued above the excellent and the enduring, and art that does not “progress” — such as the primitive or the naïve — is greeted with impatience rather than approbation.

The Dada and surrealism show is an example, par excellence, of the “Influential Movement” exhibition that can be found, with minor variations, in museums all over the country. In Rubin’s exhibition, the impact of Dada and surrealism is muted. These movements are important, the show subtly but chauvinistically suggests, as “influences” on later and really major movements such as abstract expressionism. Distasteful as such historicizing might have been to a surrealist such as André Breton, Dada and surrealism are used to serve more recent movements in the same way that ancestors are used to puff the importance of the ladies of the D.A.R.

Although it would seem unorthodox to all the avid art genealogists, it would be easier to appreciate the original impact of Dada and surrealism if the space devoted to their “heritage” were given over to a selection of the art of the years preceding Dada. In spite of Rubin’s contention that all art comes from art, he might have been hard-pressed to discover among impressionists, postimpressionists, fauves, or even cubists an appropriate set of ancestors. It would be scraping the bottom of the barrel to go all the way back to Blake, but the work of nineteenth-century romantics such as Odilon Redon (or, in a pinch, a landscape or two by Caspar David Friedrich or the American luminists) would not suffice. Baudelaire and poets who came after him might be considered legitimate ancestors, but poetry is seldom impressive when hung on museum walls.

That Dada and surrealism represented a dramatic and unprecedented revolution against the rational approach that had been dominant in Western art since the Renaissance

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ATLANTIC-LITTLE, BROWN

may be an embarrassing thing to historians devoted to the delicate cross-hatchings of slow-moving dialectic, but it is nonetheless true.

André Breton's *Second Surrealist Manifesto* goes to the heart of the matter:

Everything suggests the belief that there is a certain point of the mind where life and death, the real and the imaginary, the past and the future, the communicable and the incommunicable, the high and the low are no longer perceived as contradictions. It would be vain to look for any motive in surrealist activity other than the hope of determining that point.

Or as Hans Richter explains in his history of the Dada movement:

The myth that everything in the world can be rationally explained had been gaining ground since the time of Descartes. An inversion was necessary to restore the balance.

The realization that reason and anti-reason, sense and nonsense, design and chance, consciousness and unconsciousness, belong together as necessary parts of a whole — this was the central message of Dada.

"An inversion was necessary," as Richter says, and the Dadaists, disgusted by the spectacle of a "rationally justifiable" world war, set out to restore the irrational, the unconscious, and the contradictory to prominence. Chance, dreams, the mythology of Freud, and such techniques as automatic drawing all served as means to this end.

The balancing of the irrational against the rational involved the ancient idea of the union of opposites. In the late medieval Dutch manuscript called "The Hours of

Catherine of Cleves," for instance, a devout little painting of a saint believed to have been fed by the birds is subtly negated by the marginal image of a grinning monkey stealing birds' eggs from a nest. Such devils of contradiction, although familiar in Romanesque and medieval art, were confined during the Renaissance to isolated strongholds such as the fantasies of Bosch. However, Dada again placed the "monkey" of the irrational next to the "saint" of reason and at times employed the saint instead of the monkey as the marginal image. What resulted was far more than nihilism or nonsense: Dada was a fertile reaffirmation of psychic wholeness.

To savor the original impact of Dada and surrealism instead of merely observing their several languages (the biomorphic abstraction and surrealist illusionism that Rubin notes), it is necessary to devour contradictions. This is not always easy because a piece such as Duchamp's bottlerack (a reproduction of one of his famous Readymades) is no longer an everyday object. The suggestive contrast between the bottlerack seen in use and the bottlerack seen in isolation at an art show is therefore lost. The bottlerack is now a mere artifact of Dada — bearing the same relation to the movement that a reproduction of Napoleon's hat does to Napoleon.

Another difficulty was that the show as it was arranged in New York was hard to see. Perhaps the Los Angeles County Museum and the Art Institute of Chicago will do better, but the Modern not only hung paintings too closely in small rooms packed with super-serious notetakers (no one laughs at Dada anymore) but also saw fit to allot only two benches to the entire exhibition. The effect was to hurry the viewer through the rooms devoted to Dada and early surrealism into the slightly larger and less crowded rooms devoted to more recent art, after a quick glance at such standard shockers as Magritte's girl tearing a live bird with her teeth or Dali's *The Great Masturbator*.

Still, the contradictions that lie at the heart of Dada and surrealism abound. With these works the naïve question (Why is Delvaux's naked lady promenading with a fully dressed man?) is always the incisive question. Unexpected com-

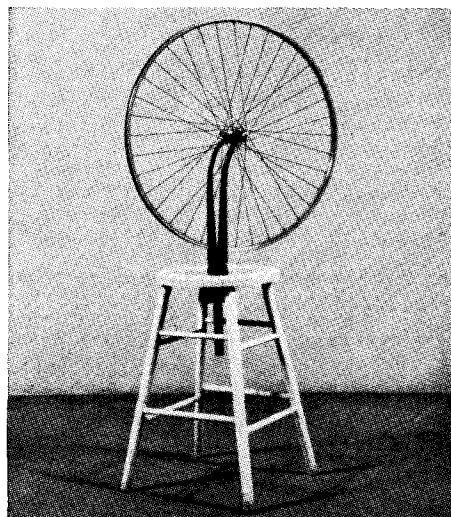
binations of things not usually found in congruence, of real and unreal, and of life and art, are both the essence and the animating force.

In this world where opposites meet, Duchamp's bicycle wheel is sitting on a stool, Meret Oppenheim's teacup is covered with fur, Picabia's



painting of gears suggests a sexual joining, and Yves Tanguy's forms may be seen as stones, semi-animate shapes, or even as patterns of thought. Scale is inconsistent and variable: de Chirico paints a classical head and a glove that dwarf the wall of a building; Magritte designs a cake of soap that overshadows a bedroom rug. Matta's abstract shapes in dynamic motion can be read as a pattern of activity which is either enormous or microscopic. Metamorphosis freely transforms objects or slyly substitutes one thing for another: a head painted by Picasso turns into a hand clutching a sphere; the nose in George Grosz's collage "Remember Uncle August, the Unhappy Inventor" is found to be a photograph of a machine fragment. Parts can be read for the whole: a few lines by Miró are sufficient to suggest a face or a figure. Wholes are constructed from incongruous but suggestive parts: a Picabia collage forms a woman's face from matches, coins, hairpins, and leather curlers. Even titles or the words included in certain paintings and collages add a counterpoint of contradiction rather than explanation; Magritte's realistic representation of a supersize pipe is neatly negated by the legend "*Ceci n'est pas une pipe*," and further complicated by the title — "The Wind and the Song."

The non sequiturs, visual puns, and myriad contradictions of this art are not readily categorized. Most standard discussions of Dada and surrealism stick to the safety of history interlarded with Freudian plati-



Photographs courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art

tudes, but the movements could be better apprehended with reference to metaphysics, poetry, magic, mysticism, and Jungian psychology.

Seldom entirely explainable but forever demanding explanation, the art of Dada and surrealism remains as tantalizing and provocative as dreams. Viewed historically, both movements are dead and cannot be revived by demonstrations, stylish openings, or a definitive catalogue, yet the contradictions of Dada and surrealism have endured — not because they are influential but because they are archetypal. As André Breton wrote, “I believe that men will long continue to feel the need to follow to its source the magical river flowing from their eyes, bathing with the same hallucinatory light and shade both the things that are and the things that are not.”

Short Reviews: Records

by Herbert Kupferberg

Brahms: Horn Trio in E-flat (*Alan Civil, Yehudi Menuhin, Hepzibah Menuhin; Angel S-36472*). The quintessence of chamber music romanticism, the Horn Trio gets a precise but desiccated presentation from musicians who should know better. To hear this work really come alive it's still necessary to hunt down the old Aubrey Brain-Busch-Serkin recording, available as an Odeon import.

Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris (*Original cast of off-Broadway show; Columbia D2S-779*). Brel's sardonic French songs retain a great deal of their point and wit when adapted into English for an off-Broadway revue. In fact they're even sharpened a bit by such devices as altering “Verdun” to “Saigon” in a commentary on the brutality of war. Even better than these English adaptations, though, are Brel's own French versions, sung by himself on Reprise 6246.

Haydn: The Creation (*Bernstein, New York Philharmonic, Camerata Singers; Columbia M2S-773*). Healthy, vigorous Haydn from Leonard Bernstein, sometimes bordering on the hard-driven. Good solo singing, especially by Judith Raskin. With so many other German recordings available, I, for one, would like to

have heard Bernstein use the English translation.

I Have a Dream — Martin Luther King, Jr. (*20th Century-Fox TFS-3201*). This is a tribute not only to the eloquence of Dr. King but to the alacrity of American record manufacturers: it was out a week after the assassination. Actually it's a rerelease of an earlier record devoted to the March on Washington of 1963. But that “I Have a Dream” speech remains a masterful oration, and in the context of what followed, is more moving than ever to hear.

Ives: The Four Symphonies (*Harold Farberman, New Philharmonia Orchestra; Vanguard-Cardinal VCS-10032/4*). Young Farberman doesn't quite match the exuberance of Bernstein or exaltation of Stokowski in their competitive recordings of Nos. 2 and 4. But this is a remarkable package just the same, and at its bargain price almost irresistible, especially for anyone still unacquainted with this giant among American composers.

Lalo: Namouna (ballet); Rapsodie Pour Orchestre (*Ansermet, Suisse Romande; London CS-6536*). As music for piping into elevators or airplanes awaiting takeoff, these lush scores have their points; purely for listening, though, their interest is — to put it mildly — mild.

Mozart: The Impresario (*Previn, Grist, Raskin, Lewis, Milnes, English Chamber Orchestra; RCA Victor LSC-3000*). A high-powered cast unleashes its talents on Mozart's modest little *Schauspieldirektor* with engaging results. The four-number opera is sung in English, and the one complaint is that the singers are a long way from pronouncing their words clearly and carefully. Without the printed English text we'd be lost.

The Nonesuch Guide to Electronic Music (*Nonesuch HC-73018*). A great idea has gone astray here, for these two records provide a technical manual rather than an aesthetic guide: they tell the how, but not the why, of electronic music. Moreover, it was a fatal mistake to have a printed text in a booklet, rather than a spoken text on the record to define and explain the sounds. Most revelatory of all in the album is the opening “Peace Three,” a very

attractive electronic composition played on a Moog Synthesizer.

Poulenc: Quatre Cycles de Melodies (*Gerard Souzay, baritone, Dalton Baldwin, piano; Philips PHS-900148*). Souzay brings more sheer voice to these songs than most of Poulenc's interpreters usually muster; he also performs two seldom heard cycles of Paul Eluard poems, “*Le travail du peintre*” and “*La fraicheur et le feu*” — the former consisting of musical vignettes of Picasso, Chagall, Braque, and other artists. The other cycles are “*Chansons villageoises*” and “*Calligrammes*.”

Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto (*Itzhak Perlman, Leinsdorf, Boston Symphony; RCA Victor LSC-3014*). The loveliest recording of this work in recent years; a dream.

Telemann: Suite in G, “The Prostitute” (*David Blum, Esterhazy Orchestra; Vanguard BGS-70695*). In the endless procession of Telemann records this one is notable for its bucolic, breezy atmosphere; Telemann's “prostitute” evidently was a country girl. Two multiple-instrument concertos round out the record.

Verdi: Ernani (*Schippers, Price, Bergonzi, Sereni, Flagello; RCA Victor LSC-6183*). Although this was made in Rome with an Italian chorus and orchestra, it represents the Metropolitan Opera in top form, with plenty of full-bodied singing and vigorous conducting. Of course, you also have to have a yen for *Ernani*.

Ethel Waters (*Columbia CL-2792*). Vintage stuff throughout, with a 1933 “Stormy Weather” backed by Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, among others, and an equally fine “Dinah” and “Cabin in the Sky.” Ethel makes it worthwhile to live in the past a little. Pretty good sound.

John Williams Plays Two Guitar Concertos (*Columbia MS-7063*). The concertos are those by Joaquin Rodrigo and Stephen Dodgson, and both are handled elegantly by Williams. The Rodrigo “*Fantasia para un gentil-hombre*” is, of course, well known by now, but the concerto by the London-born Dodgson represents a first recording. It is skilled and melodic, but not particularly characteristic of the guitar. Maybe it takes a Spaniard.

Short Reviews: Books

by Phoebe Adams

Mound Builders of Ancient America by Robert Silverberg. New York Graphic Society, \$8.95. Our forebears, finding large, incomprehensible earthworks scattered down the Mississippi Valley, refused to believe they were built by the aborigines who still cluttered up the place and impeded settlement. Mr. Silverberg describes, with gleeful and copious quotation, the nineteenth-century literature of speculation which attributed these monuments to Phoenicians, stray Vikings, the lost tribes of Israel, refugees from Atlantis, an extinct race of giants, and Welshmen. The book, which is charmingly written, ends with a history of the archaeological work which gave the mounds back to the Indians.

Joseph Conrad by J. I. M. Stewart. Dodd, Mead, \$6.00. Conrad's life and work is the general target of this book, but Dr. Stewart sees so little connection between the two that he usually fails to specify whether the ships Conrad served on were sail or steam.

The Carnal Myth by Edward Dahlberg. Weybright and Talley, \$6.50. Mr. Dahlberg's "I have been writing posthumously for a generation" is an understatement; his prose reads like *Urn Burial*. His argument is the misery of humanity's sexual condition — a complaint eloquently put, but about as practical as lamenting that the sun rises in the east. Warning: Mr. Dahlberg's mythological references should not be borrowed without checking against some less subjective authority.

Exile by Peter Weiss. Delacorte, \$5.95. The egotistical sensibility of the developing artist, even one badgered by stuffy parents and Nazi persecution, can be a tiresomely ingrown subject for a novel. Mr. Weiss, a skillful and powerful writer, has avoided most of the pitfalls, and the book maintains motion and variety to the end.

The Horsemen by Joseph Kessel. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$6.95. A father who envies his son's youth and a son who envies his father's achievements, the old themes made

novel by the characters — surly but picturesque barbarians — and the structure — a picaresque trek across darkest Afghanistan. The dialogue rings loudly of *Kim*, but the tale is worth minor adjustments.

The French by François Nourissier. Knopf, \$6.95. This survey of a nation is not as amusing as Barzini's *The Italians*, with which it will certainly be compared. It is a faintly melancholy description of France as a country subject to exceptionally violent tension between static tradition and progressive innovation. Since the text gives no hint of imminent explosion, one is inclined to take all of the author's interpretations with caution.

Permanent Poverty by Ben B. Seligman. Quadrangle, \$6.50. Professor Seligman tackles a grim subject with a sober style and a plethora of references, revealing that (1) nobody has achieved a satisfactory definition of poverty, (2) there can be no official agreement on how to deal with the undefined, and (3) attempts to start an operation regardless have broken down in boondoggling at the local level.

House Made of Dawn by N. Scott Momaday. Harper & Row, \$4.95. Mr. Momaday is a Kiowa, and the portion (about two thirds) of this first novel which deals with Kiowa tradition and the Indian's eye-and-action view of the world is unusual and good.

The Art of North America by Wolfgang Haberland. Crown, \$6.95. The Art of the World series always assumes a hardworking reader, and this volume is tougher going than most because of the lack of any historical framework to which Indian and Eskimo art can be related. The handsome objects in the colorplates, however, justify exertion.

A Brand New Life by James T. Farrell. Doubleday, \$5.95. Mr. Farrell's heroine is a young divorcée, up to no good in Chicago in 1928. Unhappily, one has the impression that the novel should have been written in 1928, when it would have been daring realism.

The Wolves by Hans Hellmut Kirst. Coward-McCann, \$6.95. Perhaps the translation has something to do

with it, but this repetitious and interminable "epic novel of small town Germany under the Nazi blight" is plain *schrecklich*.

The Jeweler's Eye by William F. Buckley, Jr. Putnam's, \$5.95. This is a collection of the testy, witty little essays by which Mr. Buckley, single-handed, seeks to make conservatism intellectually respectable.

The Burglar by Brigid Brophy. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, \$4.50. *The Burglar* is a clever play which, for no reason discernible in print, failed in London. The failure riled Miss Brophy into writing a preface, rather Shavian in both style and length, about art, critics, and her life with both. Her opinions are, as usual, independent and designed to provoke dissent.

The Pasha's Concubine and Other Tales by Ivo Andrić. Knopf, \$6.95. The short stories of Yugoslavia's Nobel Prize winner amble along like old local gossip, without climaxes, plot contrivances, or attempts to move inside the minds of the characters. One keeps reading because things keep happening, and one gradually comes to respect Mr. Andrić's subtle, impartial interest in Turks, Jews, Christians, and oddballs.

Social Organization of Hamadryas Baboons by Hans Kummer. University of Chicago, \$8.95. Dr. Kummer observed baboons in the wild for some months. What he saw will console readers alarmed by Desmond Morris' *Naked Ape*, for it appears that the sexual arrangements of baboons are as preposterous as anything contrived by men, if not more so. The writing is excessively scholarly — flat as a floor and infested with tables and charts, never intended for amateurs.

Late and Soon by Francis Leggett. Houghton Mifflin, \$5.95. The gentleman loved work and wilderness; the lady loved travel and London society. Their daughter, reconstructing the story of this incompatible marriage, discovers interesting opinions on the drawbacks of an international upbringing.

Excerpts From the Diaries of the Late God by Anthony Towne. Harper & Row, \$3.95. God is alive and a prisoner in Whimseyville.

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